

THE AGE OF FABLE



BY
THOMAS BULFINCH

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HELEN OF TROY.

From painting by Lord Leighton.

THE
AGE OF FABLE

OR
BEAUTIES OF MYTHOLOGY

BY
THOMAS BULFINCH

NEW EDITION, REVISED AND ENLARGED

VOLUME II

STORIES OF GODS AND HEROES (Continued)

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STORIES OF GODS AND HEROES

(Continued)

CHAPTER XXIII

ACHELOUS AND HERCULES—ADMETUS AND ALCESTIS—
ANTIGONE—PENELOPE

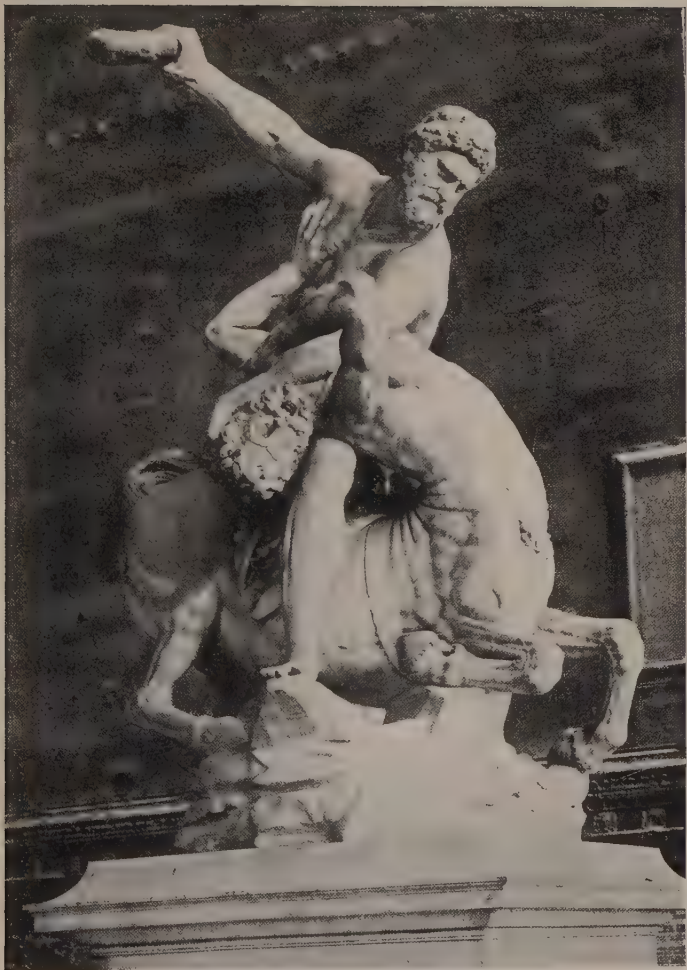
ACHELOUS AND HERCULES

THE river-god Achelous told the story of Erisichthon to Theseus and his companions, whom he was entertaining at his hospitable board, while they were delayed on their journey by the overflow of his waters. Having finished his story, he added, "But why should I tell of other persons' transformations when I myself am an instance of the possession of this power? Sometimes I become a serpent, and sometimes a bull, with horns on my head. Or I should say I once could do so; but now I have but one horn, having lost one." And here he groaned and was silent.

Theseus asked him the cause of his grief, and how he lost his horn. To which question the river-god replied as follows: "Who likes to tell of his defeats? Yet I will not hesitate to relate mine, comforting myself with the thought of the greatness of my conqueror, for it was Hercules. Perhaps you have heard of the fame of Dejanira, the fairest of maidens, whom a host of suitors strove to win. Hercules and myself were of the number, and the rest yielded to us two. He urged in his behalf his descent from Jove and his labors by which he had exceeded the exactions of Juno, his step-mother. I, on the other hand, said to the father of the maiden, 'Behold me, the king of the waters that flow

through your land. I am no stranger from a foreign shore, but belong to the country, a part of your realm. Let it not stand in my way that royal Juno owes me no enmity nor punishes me with heavy tasks. As for this man, who boasts himself the son of Jove, it is either a false pretence, or disgraceful to him if true, for it cannot be true except by his mother's shame.' As I said this Hercules scowled upon me, and with difficulty restrained his rage. 'My hand will answer better than my tongue,' said he. 'I yield to you the victory in words, but trust my cause to the strife of deeds.' With that he advanced towards me, and I was ashamed, after what I had said, to yield. I threw off my green vesture and presented myself for the struggle. He tried to throw me, now attacking my head, now my body. My bulk was my protection, and he assailed me in vain. For a time we stopped, then returned to the conflict. We each kept our position, determined not to yield, foot to foot, I bending over him, clenching his hand in mine, with my forehead almost touching his. Thrice Hercules tried to throw me off, and the fourth time he succeeded, brought me to the ground, and himself upon my back. I tell you the truth, it was as if a mountain had fallen on me. I struggled to get my arms at liberty, panting and reeking with perspiration. He gave me no chance to recover, but seized my throat. My knees were on the earth and my mouth in the dust.

"Finding that I was no match for him in the warrior's art, I resorted to others and glided away in the form of a serpent. I curled my body in a coil and hissed at him with my forked tongue. He smiled scornfully at this, and said, 'It was the labor of my infancy to conquer snakes.' So saying he clasped my neck with his hands. I was almost choked, and struggled to get my neck out of his grasp. Vanquished in this form, I tried what alone remained to me and assumed the form of a bull. He grasped my neck with his arm, and dragging my head down to the ground, overthrew me on the sand. Nor was this enough. His ruthless hand rent my horn from my head. The Naiades took it, consecrated it, and filled it with fragrant flowers. Plenty



HERCULES IN BATTLE WITH A CENTAUR.

Florence. John of Bologna.

adopted my horn and made it her own, and called it 'Cornucopia.'"

The ancients were fond of finding a hidden meaning in their mythological tales. They explain this fight of Achelous with Hercules by saying Achelous was a river that in seasons of rain overflowed its banks. When the fable says that Achelous loved Dejanira, and sought a union with her, the meaning is that the river in its windings flowed through part of Dejanira's kingdom. It was said to take the form of a snake because of its winding, and of a bull because it made a brawling or roaring in its course. When the river swelled, it made itself another channel. Thus its head was horned. Hercules prevented the return of these periodical overflows by embankments and canals; and therefore he was said to have vanquished the river-god and cut off his horn. Finally, the lands formerly subject to overflow, but now redeemed, became very fertile, and this is meant by the horn of plenty.

There is another account of the origin of the Cornucopia. Jupiter at his birth was committed by his mother Rhea to the care of the daughters of Melisseus, a Cretan king. They fed the infant deity with the milk of the goat Amalthea. Jupiter broke off one of the horns of the goat and gave it to his nurses, and endowed it with the wonderful power of becoming filled with whatever the possessor might wish.

The name of Amalthea is also given by some writers to the mother of Bacchus. It is thus used by Milton, "Paradise Lost," Book IV.:

" . . . That Nyseian isle,
Girt with the river Triton, where old Cham,
Whom Gentiles Ammon call, and Libyan Jove,
Hid Amalthea and her florid son,
Young Bacchus, from his stepdame Rhea's eye."

ADMETUS AND ALCESTIS

Æsculapius, the son of Apollo, was endowed by his father with such skill in the healing art that he even

restored the dead to life. At this Pluto took alarm, and prevailed on Jupiter to launch a thunderbolt at Æsculapius. Apollo was indignant at the destruction of his son, and wreaked his vengeance on the innocent workmen who had made the thunderbolt. These were the Cyclopes, who have their workshop under Mount Ætna, from which the smoke and flames of their furnaces are constantly issuing. Apollo shot his arrows at the Cyclopes, which so incensed Jupiter that he condemned him as a punishment to become the servant of a mortal for the space of one year. Accordingly Apollo went into the service of Admetus, king of Thessaly, and pastured his flocks for him on the verdant banks of the river Amphrysos.

Admetus was a suitor, with others, for the hand of Alcestis, the daughter of Pelias, who promised her to him who should come for her in a chariot drawn by lions and boars. This task Admetus performed by the assistance of his divine herdsman, and was made happy in the possession of Alcestis. But Admetus fell ill, and being near to death, Apollo prevailed on the Fates to spare him on condition that some one would consent to die in his stead. Admetus, in his joy at this reprieve, thought little of the ransom, and perhaps remembering the declarations of attachment which he had often heard from his courtiers and dependents fancied that it would be easy to find a substitute. But it was not so. Brave warriors, who would willingly have perilled their lives for their prince, shrunk from the thought of dying for him on the bed of sickness; and old servants who had experienced his bounty and that of his house from their childhood up, were not willing to lay down the scanty remnant of their days to show their gratitude. Men asked, "Why does not one of his parents do it? They cannot in the course of nature live much longer, and who can feel like them the call to rescue the life they gave from an untimely end?" But the parents, distressed though they were at the thought of losing him, shrunk from the call. Then Alcestis, with a generous self-devotion, proffered herself as the substitute. Admetus, fond as he was of life, would not

have submitted to receive it at such a cost; but there was no remedy. The condition imposed by the Fates had been met, and the decree was irrevocable. Alcestis sickened as Admetus revived, and she was rapidly sinking to the grave.

Just at this time Hercules arrived at the palace of Admetus, and found all the inmates in great distress for the impending loss of the devoted wife and beloved mistress. Hercules, to whom no labor was too arduous, resolved to attempt her rescue. He went and lay in wait at the door of the chamber of the dying queen, and when Death came for his prey, he seized him and forced him to resign his victim. Alcestis recovered, and was restored to her husband.

Milton alludes to the story of Alcestis in his Sonnet "on his deceased wife:"

"Methought I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me like Alcestis from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from death by force, though pale and faint."

J. R. Lowell has chosen the "Shepherd of King Admetus" for the subject of a short poem. He makes that event the first introduction of poetry to men.

"Men called him but a shiftless youth,
In whom no good they saw,
And yet unwittingly, in truth,
They made his careless words their law.

"And day by day more holy grew
Each spot where he had trod,
Till after-poets only knew
Their first-born brother was a god."

ANTIGONE

A large proportion both of the interesting persons and of the exalted acts of legendary Greece belongs to the female sex. Antigone was as bright an example of filial and sisterly fidelity as was Alcestis of conju-

bial devotion. She was the daughter of Œdipus and Jocasta, who with all their descendants were the victims of an unrelenting fate, dooming them to destruction. Œdipus in his madness had torn out his eyes, and was driven forth from his kingdom Thebes, dreaded and abandoned by all men, as an object of divine vengeance. Antigone, his daughter, alone shared his wanderings and remained with him till he died, and then returned to Thebes.

Her brothers, Eteocles and Polynices, had agreed to share the kingdom between them, and reign alternately year by year. The first year fell to the lot of Eteocles, who, when his time expired, refused to surrender the kingdom to his brother. Polynices fled to Adrastus, king of Argos, who gave him his daughter in marriage, and aided him with an army to enforce his claim to the kingdom. This led to the celebrated expedition of the "Seven against Thebes," which furnished ample materials for the epic and tragic poets of Greece.

Amphiaraus, the brother-in-law of Adrastus, opposed the enterprise, for he was a soothsayer, and knew by his art that no one of the leaders except Adrastus would live to return. But Amphiaraus, on his marriage to Eriphyle, the king's sister, had agreed that whenever he and Adrastus should differ in opinion, the decision should be left to Eriphyle. Polynices, knowing this, gave Eriphyle the collar of Harmonia, and thereby gained her to his interest. This collar or necklace was a present which Vulcan had given to Harmonia on her marriage with Cadmus, and Polynices had taken it with him on his flight from Thebes. Eriphyle could not resist so tempting a bribe, and by her decision the war was resolved on, and Amphiaraus went to his certain fate. He bore his part bravely in the contest, but could not avert his destiny. Pursued by the enemy, he fled along the river, when a thunderbolt launched by Jupiter opened the ground, and he, his chariot, and his charioteer were swallowed up.

It would not be in place here to detail all the acts of heroism or atrocity which marked the contest; but we must not omit to record the fidelity of Evadne as

an offset to the weakness of Eriphyle. Capaneus, the husband of Evadne, in the ardor of the fight declared that he would force his way into the city in spite of Jove himself. Placing a ladder against the wall he mounted, but Jupiter, offended at his impious language, struck him with a thunderbolt. When his obsequies were celebrated, Evadne cast herself on his funeral pile and perished.

Early in the contest Eteocles consulted the sooth-sayer Tiresias as to the issue. Tiresias in his youth had by chance seen Minerva bathing. The goddess in her wrath deprived him of his sight, but afterwards relenting gave him in compensation the knowledge of future events. When consulted by Eteocles, he declared that victory should fall to Thebes if Menœceus, the son of Creon, gave himself a voluntary victim. The heroic youth, learning the response, threw away his life in the first encounter.

The siege continued long, with various success. At length both hosts agreed that the brothers should decide their quarrel by single combat. They fought and fell by each other's hands. The armies then renewed the fight, and at last the invaders were forced to yield, and fled, leaving their dead unburied. Creon, the uncle of the fallen princes, now become king, caused Eteocles to be buried with distinguished honor, but suffered the body of Polynices to lie where it fell, forbidding every one on pain of death to give it burial.

Antigone, the sister of Polynices, heard with indignation the revolting edict which consigned her brother's body to the dogs and vultures, depriving it of those rites which were considered essential to the repose of the dead. Unmoved by the dissuading counsel of an affectionate but timid sister, and unable to procure assistance, she determined to brave the hazard, and to bury the body with her own hands. She was detected in the act, and Creon gave orders that she should be buried alive, as having deliberately set at naught the solemn edict of the city. Her lover, Hæmon, the son of Creon, unable to avert her fate, would not survive her, and fell by his own hand.

Antigone forms the subject of two fine tragedies of the Grecian poet Sophocles. Mrs. Jameson, in her "Characteristics of Women," has compared her character with that of Cordelia, in Shakspeare's "King Lear." The perusal of her remarks cannot fail to gratify our readers.

The following is the lamentation of Antigone over Œdipus, when death has at last relieved him from his sufferings:

"Alas! I only wished I might have died
 With my poor father; wherefore should I ask
 For longer life?
 O, I was fond of misery with him;
 E'en what was most unlovely grew beloved
 When he was with me. O my dearest father,
 Beneath the earth now in deep darkness hid,
 Worn as thou wert with age, to me thou still
 Wast dear, and shalt be ever."

—*Francklin's Sophocles.*

PENELOPE

Penelope is another of those mythic heroines whose beauties were rather those of character and conduct than of person. She was the daughter of Icarius, a Spartan prince. Ulysses, king of Ithaca, sought her in marriage, and won her, over all competitors. When the moment came for the bride to leave her father's house, Icarius, unable to bear the thoughts of parting with his daughter, tried to persuade her to remain with him, and not accompany her husband to Ithaca. Ulysses gave Penelope her choice, to stay or go with him. Penelope made no reply, but dropped her veil over her face. Icarius urged her no further, but when she was gone erected a statue to Modesty on the spot where they parted.

Ulysses and Penelope had not enjoyed their union more than a year when it was interrupted by the events which called Ulysses to the Trojan war. During his long absence, and when it was doubtful whether he still lived, and highly improbable that he would ever return, Penelope was importuned by numerous suitors, from whom there seemed no refuge but in choosing one of

them for her husband. Penelope, however, employed every art to gain time, still hoping for Ulysses' return. One of her arts of delay was engaging in the preparation of a robe for the funeral canopy of Laertes, her husband's father. She pledged herself to make her choice among the suitors when the robe was finished. During the day she worked at the robe, but in the night she undid the work of the day. This is the famous Penelope's web, which is used as a proverbial expression for anything which is perpetually doing but never done. The rest of Penelope's history will be told when we give an account of her husband's adventures.

CHAPTER XXIV

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE—ARISTÆUS—AMPHION—LINUS
—THAMYRIS—MARSYAS—MELAMPUS—MUSÆUS

ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

ORPHEUS was the son of Apollo and the Muse Calliope. He was presented by his father with a Lyre and taught to play upon it, which he did to such perfection that nothing could withstand the charm of his music. Not only his fellow-mortals but wild beasts were softened by his strains, and gathering round him laid by their fierceness, and stood entranced with his lay. Nay, the very trees and rocks were sensible to the charm. The former crowded round him and the latter relaxed somewhat of their hardness, softened by his notes.

Hymen had been called to bless with his presence the nuptials of Orpheus with Eurydice; but though he attended, he brought no happy omens with him. His very torch smoked and brought tears into their eyes. In coincidence with such prognostics, Eurydice, shortly after her marriage, while wandering with the nymphs, her companions, was seen by the shepherd Aristæus, who was struck with her beauty and made advances to

her. She fled, and in flying trod upon a snake in the grass, was bitten in the foot, and died. Orpheus sang his grief to all who breathed the upper air, both gods and men, and finding it all unavailing resolved to seek his wife in the regions of the dead. He descended by a cave situated on the side of the promontory of Tænarus and arrived at the Stygian realm. He passed through crowds of ghosts and presented himself before the throne of Pluto and Proserpine. Accompanying the words with the lyre, he sung, "O deities of the underworld, to whom all we who live must come, hear my words, for they are true. I come not to spy out the secrets of Tartarus, nor to try my strength against the three-headed dog with snaky hair who guards the entrance. I come to seek my wife, whose opening years the poisonous viper's fang has brought to an untimely end. Love has led me here, Love, a god all powerful with us who dwell on the earth, and, if old traditions say true, not less so here. I implore you by these abodes full of terror, these realms of silence and uncreated things, unite again the thread of Eurydice's life. We all are destined to you, and sooner or later must pass to your domain. She too, when she shall have filled her term of life, will rightly be yours. But till then grant her to me, I beseech you. If you deny me I cannot return alone; you shall triumph in the death of us both."

As he sang these tender strains, the very ghosts shed tears. Tantalus, in spite of his thirst, stopped for a moment his efforts for water, Ixion's wheel stood still, the vulture ceased to tear the giant's liver, the daughters of Danaüs rested from their task of drawing water in a sieve, and Sisyphus sat on his rock to listen. Then for the first time, it is said, the cheeks of the Furies were wet with tears. Proserpine could not resist, and Pluto himself gave way. Eurydice was called. She came from among the new-arrived ghosts, limping with her wounded foot. Orpheus was permitted to take her away with him on one condition, that he should not turn around to look at her till they should have reached the upper air. Under this condition they proceeded on

their way, he leading, she following, through passages dark and steep, in total silence, till they had nearly reached the outlet into the cheerful upper world, when Orpheus, in a moment of forgetfulness, to assure himself that she was still following, cast a glance behind him, when instantly she was borne away. Stretching out their arms to embrace each other, they grasped only the air! Dying now a second time, she yet cannot reproach her husband, for how can she blame his impatience to behold her? "Farewell," she said, "a last farewell,"—and was hurried away, so fast that the sound hardly reached his ears.

Orpheus endeavored to follow her, and besought permission to return and try once more for her release; but the stern ferryman repulsed him and refused passage. Seven days he lingered about the brink, without food or sleep; then bitterly accusing of cruelty the powers of Erebus, he sang his complaints to the rocks and mountains, melting the hearts of tigers and moving the oaks from their stations. He held himself aloof from womankind, dwelling constantly on the recollection of his sad mischance. The Thracian maidens tried their best to captivate him, but he repulsed their advances. They bore with him as long as they could; but finding him insensible one day, excited by the rites of Bacchus, one of them exclaimed, "See yonder our despiser!" and threw at him her javelin. The weapon, as soon as it came within the sound of his lyre, fell harmless at his feet. So did also the stones that they threw at him. But the women raised a scream and drowned the voice of the music, and then the missiles reached him and soon were stained with his blood. The maniacs tore him limb from limb, and threw his head and his lyre into the river Hebrus, down which they floated, murmuring sad music, to which the shores responded a plaintive symphony. The Muses gathered up the fragments of his body and buried them at Libethra, where the nightingale is said to sing over his grave more sweetly than in any other part of Greece. His lyre was placed by Jupiter among the stars. His shade passed a second time to Tartarus, where he sought out his Eurydice and embraced her

with eager arms. They roam the happy fields together now, sometimes he leading, sometimes she; and Orpheus gazes as much as he will upon her, no longer incurring a penalty for a thoughtless glance.

The story of Orpheus has furnished Pope with an illustration of the power of music, for his "Ode for St. Cecilia's Day." The following stanza relates the conclusion of the story:

"But soon, too soon the lover turns his eyes;
 Again she falls, again she dies, she dies!
 How wilt thou now the fatal sisters move?
 No crime was thine, if 't is no crime to love.
 Now under hanging mountains,
 Beside the falls of fountains,
 Or where Hebrus wanders,
 Rolling in meanders,
 All alone,
 He makes his moan,
 And calls her ghost,
 Forever, ever, ever lost!
 Now with furies surrounded,
 Despairing, confounded,
 He trembles, he glows,
 Amidst Rhodope's snows.
 See, wild as the winds o'er the desert he flies;
 Hark! Hæmus resounds with the Bacchanals' cries;
 Ah, see, he dies!
 Yet even in death Eurydice he sung,
 Eurydice still trembled on his tongue:
 Eurydice the woods
 Eurydice the floods
 Eurydice the rocks and hollow mountains rung."

The superior melody of the nightingale's song over the grave of Orpheus is alluded to by Southey in his "Thalaba":

"Then on his ear what sounds
 Of harmony arose!
 Far music and the distance-mellowed song
 From bowers of merriment;
 The waterfall remote;
 The murmuring of the leafy groves;
 The single nightingale
 Perched in the rosier by, so richly toned,
 That never from that most melodious bird

Singing a love song to his brooding mate,
Did Thracian shepherd by the grave
Of Orpheus hear a sweeter melody,
Though there the spirit of the sepulchre
All his own power infuse, to swell
The incense that he loves."

ARISTÆUS, THE BEE-KEEPER

Man avails himself of the instincts of the inferior animals for his own advantage. Hence sprang the art of keeping bees. Honey must first have been known as a wild product, the bees building their structures in hollow trees or holes in the rocks, or any similar cavity that chance offered. Thus occasionally the carcass of a dead animal would be occupied by the bees for that purpose. It was no doubt from some such incident that the superstition arose that the bees were engendered by the decaying flesh of the animal; and Virgil, in the following story, shows how this supposed fact may be turned to account for renewing the swarm when it has been lost by disease or accident:

Aristæus, who first taught the management of bees, was the son of the water-nymph Cyrene. His bees had perished, and he resorted for aid to his mother. He stood at the river side and thus addressed her: "O mother, the pride of my life is taken from me! I have lost my precious bees. My care and skill have availed me nothing, and you my mother have not warded off from me the blow of misfortune." His mother heard these complaints as she sat in her palace at the bottom of the river, with her attendant nymphs around her. They were engaged in female occupations, spinning and weaving, while one told stories to amuse the rest. The sad voice of Aristæus interrupting their occupation, one of them put her head above the water and seeing him, returned and gave information to his mother, who ordered that he should be brought into her presence. The river at her command opened itself and let him pass in, while it stood curled like a mountain on either side. He descended to the region where the fountains of the great rivers lie; he saw the enormous receptacles of waters

and was almost deafened with the roar, while he surveyed them hurrying off in various directions to water the face of the earth. Arriving at his mother's apartment, he was hospitably received by Cyrene and her nymphs, who spread their table with the richest dainties. They first poured out libations to Neptune, then regaled themselves with the feast, and after that Cyrene thus addressed him: "There is an old prophet named Proteus, who dwells in the sea and is a favorite of Neptune, whose herd of sea-calves he pastures. We nymphs hold him in great respect, for he is a learned sage and knows all things, past, present, and to come. He can tell you, my son, the cause of the mortality among your bees, and how you may remedy it. But he will not do it voluntarily, however you may entreat him. You must compel him by force. If you seize him and chain him, he will answer your questions in order to get released, for he cannot by all his arts get away if you hold fast the chains. I will carry you to his cave, where he comes at noon to take his midday repose. Then you may easily secure him. But when he finds himself captured, his resort is to a power he possesses of changing himself into various forms. He will become a wild boar or a fierce tiger, a scaly dragon or lion with yellow mane. Or he will make a noise like the crackling of flames or the rush of water, so as to tempt you to let go the chain, when he will make his escape. But you have only to keep him fast bound, and at last when he finds all his arts unavailing, he will return to his own figure and obey your commands." So saying she sprinkled her son with fragrant nectar, the beverage of the gods, and immediately an unusual vigor filled his frame, and courage his heart, while perfume breathed all around him.

The nymph led her son to the prophet's cave and concealed him among the recesses of the rocks, while she herself took her place behind the clouds. When noon came and the hour when men and herds retreat from the glaring sun to indulge in quiet slumber, Proteus issued from the water, followed by his herd of sea-calves which spread themselves along the shore. He sat on the rock and counted his herd; then stretched himself on

the floor of the cave and went to sleep. Aristæus hardly allowed him to get fairly asleep before he fixed the fetters on him and shouted aloud. Proteus, waking and finding himself captured, immediately resorted to his arts, becoming first a fire, then a flood, then a horrible wild beast, in rapid succession. But finding all would not do, he at last resumed his own form and addressed the youth in angry accents: "Who are you, bold youth, who thus invade my abode, and what do you want of me?" Aristæus replied, "Proteus, you know already, for it is needless for any one to attempt to deceive you. And do you also cease your efforts to elude me. I am led hither by divine assistance, to know from you the cause of my misfortune and how to remedy it." At these words the prophet, fixing on him his gray eyes with a piercing look, thus spoke: "You receive the merited reward of your deeds, by which Eurydice met her death, for in flying from you she trod upon a serpent, of whose bite she died. To avenge her death, the nymphs, her companions, have sent this destruction to your bees. You have to appease their anger, and thus it must be done: Select four bulls, of perfect form and size, and four cows of equal beauty, build four altars to the nymphs, and sacrifice the animals, leaving their carcasses in the leafy grove. To Orpheus and Eurydice you shall pay such funeral honors as may allay their resentment. Returning after nine days, you will examine the bodies of the cattle slain and see what will befall." Aristæus faithfully obeyed these directions. He sacrificed the cattle, he left their bodies in the grove, he offered funeral honors to the shades of Orpheus and Eurydice; then returning on the ninth day he examined the bodies of the animals, and, wonderful to relate! a swarm of bees had taken possession of one of the carcasses and were pursuing their labors there as in a hive.

In "The Task," Cowper alludes to the story of Aristæus, when speaking of the ice-palace built by the Empress Anne of Russia. He has been describing the fantastic forms which ice assumes in connection with waterfalls, etc.:

"Less worthy of applause though more admired
 Because a novelty, the work of man,
 Imperial mistress of the fur-clad Russ,
 Thy most magnificent and mighty freak,
 The wonder of the north. No forest fell
 When thou wouldst build, no quarry sent its stores
 T' enrich thy walls; but thou didst hew the floods
 And make thy marble of the glassy wave.
 In such a palace Aristæus found
 Cyrene, when he bore the plaintive tale
 Of his lost bees to her maternal ear."

Milton also appears to have had Cyrene and her domestic scene in his mind when he describes to us Sabrina, the nymph of the river Severn, in the Guardian-spirit's Song in "Comus":

"Sabrina fair!
 Listen where thou art sitting
 Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave
 In twisted braids of lilies knitting
 The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
 Listen for dear honor's sake,
 Goddess of the silver lake!
 Listen and save."

The following are other celebrated mythical poets and musicians, some of whom were hardly inferior to Orpheus himself:

AMPHION

Amphion was the son of Jupiter and Antiope, queen of Thebes. With his twin brother Zethus he was exposed at birth on Mount Cithæron, where they grew up among the shepherds, not knowing their parentage. Mercury gave Amphion a lyre and taught him to play upon it, and his brother occupied himself in hunting and tending the flocks. Meanwhile Antiope, their mother, who had been treated with great cruelty by Lycus, the usurping king of Thebes, and by Dirce, his wife, found means to inform her children of their rights and to summon them to her assistance. With a band of their fellow-herdsmen they attacked and slew Lycus, and tying Dirce by the hair of her head to a bull, let him drag her

ill she was dead. Amphion, having become king of Thebes, fortified the city with a wall. It is said that when he played on his lyre the stones moved of their own accord and took their places in the wall.

See Tennyson's poem of "Amphion" for an amusing use made of this story.

LINUS

Linus was the instructor of Hercules in music, but having one day reproved his pupil rather harshly, he roused the anger of Hercules, who struck him with his lyre and killed him.

THAMYRIS

An ancient Thracian bard, who in his presumption challenged the Muses to a trial of skill, and being overcome in the contest, was deprived by them of his sight. Milton alludes to him with other blind bards, when speaking of his own blindness, "Paradise Lost," Book III., 35.

MARSYAS

Minerva invented the flute, and played upon it to the delight of all the celestial auditors; but the mischievous urchin Cupid having dared to laugh at the queer face which the goddess made while playing, Minerva threw the instrument indignantly away, and it fell down to earth, and was found by Marsyas. He blew upon it, and drew from it such ravishing sounds that he was tempted to challenge Apollo himself to a musical contest. The god of course triumphed, and punished Marsyas by flaying him alive.

MELAMPUS

Melampus was the first mortal endowed with prophetic powers. Before his house there stood an oak tree containing a serpent's nest. The old serpents were killed by the servants, but Melampus took care of the young ones and fed them carefully. One day when he was asleep under the oak the serpents licked his ears

with their tongues. On awaking he was astonished to find that he now understood the language of birds and creeping things. This knowledge enabled him to foretell future events, and he became a renowned soothsayer. At one time his enemies took him captive and kept him strictly imprisoned. Melampus in the silence of the night heard the woodworms in the timbers talking together, and found out by what they said that the timbers were nearly eaten through and the roof would soon fall in. He told his captors and demanded to be let out, warning them also. They took his warning, and thus escaped destruction, and rewarded Melampus and held him in high honor.

MUSÆUS

A semi-mythological personage who was represented by one tradition to be the son of Orpheus. He is said to have written sacred poems and oracles. Milton couples his name with that of Orpheus in his "Il Penseroso":

"But O, sad virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower,
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes as warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek."

CHAPTER XXV

ARION—IBYCUS—SIMONIDES—SAPPHO

THE poets whose adventures compose this chapter were real persons some of whose works yet remain, and their influence on poets who succeeded them is yet more important than their poetical remains. The adventures recorded of them in the following stories rest on the same authority as other narratives of the "Age of Fable," that is, of the poets who have told them. In their present form, the first two are translated from

the German, Arion from Schlegel, and Ibycus from Schiller.

ARION

Arion was a famous musician, and dwelt in the court of Periander, king of Corinth, with whom he was a great favorite. There was to be a musical contest in Sicily, and Arion longed to compete for the prize. He told his wish to Periander, who besought him like a brother to give up the thought. "Pray stay with me," he said, "and be contented. He who strives to win may lose." Arion answered, "A wandering life best suits the free heart of a poet. The talent which a god bestowed on me, I would fain make a source of pleasure to others. And if I win the prize, how will the enjoyment of it be increased by the consciousness of my widespread fame!" He went, won the prize, and embarked with his wealth in a Corinthian ship for home. On the second morning after setting sail, the wind breathed mild and fair. "O Periander," he exclaimed, "dismiss your fears! Soon shall you forget them in my embrace. With what lavish offerings will we display our gratitude to the gods, and how merry will we be at the festal board!" The wind and sea continued propitious. Not a cloud dimmed the firmament. He had not trusted too much to the ocean—but he had to man. He overheard the seamen exchanging hints with one another, and found they were plotting to possess themselves of his treasure. Presently they surrounded him loud and mutinous, and said, "Arion, you must die! If you would have a grave on shore, yield yourself to die on this spot; but if otherwise, cast yourself into the sea." "Will nothing satisfy you but my life?" said he. "Take my gold, and welcome. I willingly buy my life at that price." "No, no; we cannot spare you. Your life would be too dangerous to us. Where could we go to escape from Periander, if he should know that you had been robbed by us? Your gold would be of little use to us, if on returning home, we could never more be free from fear." "Grant me, then," said he, "a last request, since nought will avail to save my life, that I

may die, as I have lived, as becomes a bard. When I shall have sung my death song, and my harp-strings shall have ceased to vibrate, then I will bid farewell to life, and yield uncomplaining to my fate." This prayer, like the others, would have been unheeded,—they thought only of their booty,—but to hear so famous a musician, that moved their rude hearts. "Suffer me," he added, "to arrange my dress. Apollo will not favor me unless I be clad in my minstrel garb."

He clothed his well-proportioned limbs in gold and purple fair to see, his tunic fell around him in graceful folds, jewels adorned his arms, his brow was crowned with a golden wreath, and over his neck and shoulders flowed his hair perfumed with odors. His left hand held the lyre, his right the ivory wand with which he struck its chords. Like one inspired, he seemed to drink the morning air and glitter in the morning ray. The seamen gazed with admiration. He strode forward to the vessel's side and looked down into the deep blue sea. Addressing his lyre, he sang, "Companion of my voice, come with me to the realm of shades. Though Cerberus may growl, we know the power of song can tame his rage. Ye heroes of Elysium, who have passed the darkling flood,—ye happy souls, soon shall I join your band. Yet can ye relieve my grief? Alas, I leave my friend behind me. Thou, who didst find thy Eurydice, and lose her again as soon as found; when she had vanished like a dream, how didst thou hate the cheerful light! I must away, but I will not fear. The gods look down upon us. Ye who slay me unoffending, when I am no more, your time of trembling shall come. Ye Nereids, receive your guest, who throws himself upon your mercy!" So saying, he sprang into the deep sea. The waves covered him, and the seamen held on their way, fancying themselves safe from all danger of detection.

But the strains of his music had drawn round him the inhabitants of the deep to listen, and Dolphins followed the ship as if chained by a spell. While he struggled in the waves, a Dolphin offered him his back, and carried him mounted thereon safe to shore. At the

spot where he landed, a monument of brass was afterwards erected upon the rocky shore, to preserve the memory of the event.

When Arion and the dolphin parted, each to his own element, Arion thus poured forth his thanks: "Farewell, thou faithful, friendly fish! Would that I could reward thee; but thou canst not wend with me, nor I with thee. Companionship we may not have. May Galatea, queen of the deep, accord thee her favor, and thou, proud of the burden, draw her chariot over the smooth mirror of the deep."

Arion hastened from the shore, and soon saw before him the towers of Corinth. He journeyed on, harp in hand, singing as he went, full of love and happiness, forgetting his losses, and mindful only of what remained, his friend and his lyre. He entered the hospitable halls, and was soon clasped in the embrace of Periander. "I come back to thee, my friend," he said. "The talent which a god bestowed has been the delight of thousands, but false knaves have stripped me of my well-earned treasure; yet I retain the consciousness of wide spread fame." Then he told Periander all the wonderful events that had befallen him, who heard him with amazement. "Shall such wickedness triumph?" said he. "Then in vain is power lodged in my hands. That we may discover the criminals, you must remain here in concealment, and so they will approach without suspicion." When the ship arrived in the harbor, he summoned the mariners before him. "Have you heard anything of Arion?" he inquired. "I anxiously look for his return." They replied, "We left him well and prosperous in Tarentum." As they said these words, Arion stepped forth and faced them. His well-proportioned limbs were arrayed in gold and purple fair to see, his tunic fell around him in graceful folds, jewels adorned his arms, his brow was crowned with a golden wreath, and over his neck and shoulders flowed his hair perfumed with odors; his left hand held the lyre, his right the ivory wand with which he struck its chords. They fell prostrate at his feet, as if a lightning bolt had struck them. "We meant to murder him, and he has become

a god. O Earth, open and receive us!" Then Periander spoke. "He lives, the master of the lay! Kind Heaven protects the poet's life. As for you, I invoke not the spirit of vengeance; Arion wishes not your blood. Ye slaves of avarice, begone! Seek some barbarous land, and never may aught beautiful delight your souls!"

Spenser represents Arion, mounted on his dolphin, accompanying the train of Neptune and Amphitrite:

"Then was there heard a most celestial sound
Of dainty music which did next ensue,
And, on the floating waters as enthroned,
Arion with his harp unto him drew
The ears and hearts of all that goodly crew;
Even when as yet the dolphin which him bore
Through the Ægean Seas from pirates' view,
Stood still, by him astonished at his lore,
And all the raging seas for joy forgot to roar."

Byron, in his "Childe Harold," Canto II., alludes to the story of Arion, when, describing his voyage, he represents one of the seamen making music to entertain the rest:

"The moon is up; by Heaven a lovely eve!
Long streams of light o'er dancing waves expand;
Now lads on shore may sigh and maids believe;
Such be our fate when we return to land!
Meantime some rude Arion's restless hand
Wakes the brisk harmony that sailors love;
A circle there of merry listeners stand,
Or to some well-known measure featly move
Thoughtless as if on shore they still were free to rove."

IBYCUS

In order to understand the story of Ibycus which follows it is necessary to remember, first, that the theatres of the ancients were immense fabrics capable of containing from ten to thirty thousand spectators. and as they were used only on festival occasions, and admission was free to all, they were usually filled. They were without roofs and open to the sky, and the performances were in the daytime. Secondly, the appalling representation of the Furies is not exaggerated

in the story. It is recorded that Æschylus, the tragic poet, having on one occasion represented the Furies in a chorus of fifty performers, the terror of the spectators was such that many fainted and were thrown into convulsions, and the magistrates forbade a like representation for the future.

Ibycus, the pious poet, was on his way to the chariot races and musical competitions held at the Isthmus of Corinth, which attracted all of Grecian lineage. Apollo had bestowed on him the gift of song, the honeyed lips of the poet, and he pursued his way with lightsome step, full of the god. Already the towers of Corinth crowning the height appeared in view, and he had entered with pious awe the sacred grove of Neptune. No living object was in sight, only a flock of cranes flew overhead taking the same course as himself in their migration to a southern clime. "Good luck to you, ye friendly squadrons," he exclaimed, "my companions from across the sea. I take your company for a good omen. We come from far and fly in search of hospitality. May both of us meet that kind reception which shields the stranger guest from harm!"

He paced briskly on, and soon was in the middle of the wood. There suddenly, at a narrow pass, two robbers stepped forth and barred his way. He must yield or fight. But his hand, accustomed to the lyre, and not to the strife of arms, sank powerless. He called for help on men and gods, but his cry reached no defender's ear. "Then here must I die," said he, "in a strange land, unlamented, cut off by the hand of outlaws, and see none to avenge my cause." Sore wounded, he sank to the earth, when hoarse screamed the cranes overhead. "Take up my cause, ye cranes," he said, "since no voice but yours answers to my cry." So saying he closed his eyes in death.

The body, despoiled and mangled, was found, and though disfigured with wounds, was recognized by the friend in Corinth who had expected him as a guest. "Is it thus I find you restored to me?" he exclaimed. "I who hoped to entwine your temples with the wreath of triumph in the strife of song!"

The guests assembled at the festival heard the tidings with dismay. All Greece felt the wound, every heart owned its loss. They crowded round the tribunal of the magistrates, and demanded vengeance on the murderers and expiation with their blood.

But what trace or mark shall point out the perpetrator from amidst the vast multitude attracted by the splendor of the feast? Did he fall by the hands of robbers or did some private enemy slay him? The all-discerning sun alone can tell, for no other eye beheld it. Yet not improbably the murderer even now walks in the midst of the throng, and enjoys the fruits of his crime, while vengeance seeks for him in vain. Perhaps in their own temple's enclosure he defies the gods, mingling freely in this throng of men that now presses into the amphitheatre.

For now crowded together, row on row, the multitude fill the seats till it seems as if the very fabric would give way. The murmur of voices sounds like the roar of the sea, while the circles widening in their ascent rise tier on tier, as if they would reach the sky.

And now the vast assemblage listens to the awful voice of the chorus personating the Furies, which in solemn guise advances with measured step, and moves around the circuit of the theatre. Can they be mortal women who compose that awful group, and can that vast concourse of silent forms be living beings?

The choristers, clad in black, bore in their fleshless hands torches blazing with a pitchy flame. Their cheeks were bloodless, and in place of hair writhing and swelling serpents curled around their brows. Forming a circle, these awful beings sang their hymns, rending the hearts of the guilty, and enchaining all their faculties. It rose and swelled, overpowering the sound of the instruments, stealing the judgment, palsying the heart, curdling the blood.

"Happy the man who keeps his heart pure from guilt and crime! Him we avengers touch not; he treads the path of life secure from us. But woe! woe! to him who has done the deed of secret murder. We the fearful family of Night fasten ourselves upon his whole

being. Thinks he by flight to escape us? We fly still faster in pursuit, twine our snakes around his feet, and bring him to the ground. Unwearied we pursue; no pity checks our course; still on and on, to the end of life, we give him no peace nor rest." Thus the Eumenides sang, and moved in solemn cadence, while stillness like the stillness of death sat over the whole assembly as if in the presence of superhuman beings; and then in solemn march completing the circuit of the theatre, they passed out at the back of the stage.

Every heart fluttered between illusion and reality, and every breast panted with undefined terror, quailing before the awful power that watches secret crimes and winds unseen the skein of destiny. At that moment a cry burst forth from one of the uppermost benches—"Look! look! comrade, yonder are the cranes of Ibycus!" And suddenly there appeared sailing across the sky a dark object which a moment's inspection showed to be a flock of cranes flying directly over the theatre. "Of Ibycus! did he say?" The beloved name revived the sorrow in every breast. As wave follows wave over the face of the sea, so ran from mouth to mouth the words, "Of Ibycus! him whom we all lament, whom some murderer's hand laid low! What have the cranes to do with him?" And louder grew the swell of voices, while like a lightning's flash the thought sped through every heart, "Observe the power of the Eumenides! The pious poet shall be avenged! the murderer has informed against himself. Seize the man who uttered that cry and the other to whom he spoke!"

The culprit would gladly have recalled his words, but it was too late. The faces of the murderers, pale with terror, betrayed their guilt. The people took them before the judge, they confessed their crime, and suffered the punishment they deserved.

SIMONIDES

Simonides was one of the most prolific of the early poets of Greece, but only a few fragments of his compositions have descended to us. He wrote hymns, tri-

umphal odes, and elegies. In the last species of composition he particularly excelled. His genius was inclined to the pathetic, and none could touch with truer effect the chords of human sympathy. The "Lamentation of Danaë," the most important of the fragments which remain of his poetry, is based upon the tradition that Danaë and her infant son were confined by order of her father, Acrisius, in a chest and set adrift on the sea. The chest floated towards the island of Seriphus, where both were rescued by Dictys, a fisherman, and carried to Polydectes, king of the country, who received and protected them. The child, Perseus, when grown up became a famous hero, whose adventures have been recorded in a previous chapter.

Simonides passed much of his life at the courts of princes, and often employed his talents in panegyric and festal odes, receiving his reward from the munificence of those whose exploits he celebrated. This employment was not derogatory, but closely resembles that of the earliest bards, such as Demodocus, described by Homer, or of Homer himself, as recorded by tradition.

On one occasion, when residing at the court of Scopas, king of Thessaly, the prince desired him to prepare a poem in celebration of his exploits, to be recited at a banquet. In order to diversify his theme, Simonides, who was celebrated for his piety, introduced into his poem the exploits of Castor and Pollux. Such digressions were not unusual with the poets on similar occasions, and one might suppose an ordinary mortal might have been content to share the praises of the sons of Leda. But vanity is exacting; and as Scopas sat at his festal board among his courtiers and sycophants, he grudged every verse that did not rehearse his own praises. When Simonides approached to receive the promised reward Scopas bestowed but half the expected sum, saying, "Here is payment for my portion of thy performance; Castor and Pollux will doubtless compensate thee for so much as relates to them." The disconcerted poet returned to his seat amidst the laughter which followed the great man's jest. In a little time he received a message that two young men on

horseback were waiting without and anxious to see him. Simonides hastened to the door, but looked in vain for the visitors. Scarcely, however, had he left the banqueting hall when the roof fell in with a loud crash, burying Scopas and all his guests beneath the ruins. On inquiring as to the appearance of the young men who had sent for him, Simonides was satisfied that they were no other than Castor and Pollux themselves.

SAPPHO

Sappho was a poetess who flourished in a very early age of Greek literature. Of her works few fragments remain, but they are enough to establish her claim to eminent poetical genius. The story of Sappho commonly alluded to is that she was passionately in love with a beautiful youth named Phaon, and failing to obtain a return of affection she threw herself from the promontory of Leucadia into the sea, under a superstition that those who should take that "Lover's-leap" would, if not destroyed, be cured of their love.

Byron alludes to the story of Sappho in "Childe Harold," Canto II.:

"Childe Harold sailed and passed the barren spot
Where sad Penelope o'erlooked the wave,
And onward viewed the mount, not yet forgot,
The lover's refuge and the Lesbian's grave.
Dark Sappho! could not verse immortal save
That breast imbued with such immortal fire?

"'Twas on a Grecian autumn's gentle eve
Childe Harold hailed Leucadia's cape afar;" etc.

Those who wish to know more of Sappho and her "leap" are referred to the "Spectator," Nos. 223 and 229. See also Moore's "Evenings in Greece."

CHAPTER XXVI

ENDYMION—ORION—AURORA AND TITHONUS—ACIS AND
GALATEA

DIANA AND ENDYMION

ENDYMION was a beautiful youth who fed his flock on Mount Latmos. One calm, clear night Diana, the moon, looked down and saw him sleeping. The cold heart of the virgin goddess was warmed by his surpassing beauty, and she came down to him, kissed him, and watched over him while he slept.

Another story was that Jupiter bestowed on him the gift of perpetual youth united with perpetual sleep. Of one so gifted we can have but few adventures to record. Diana, it was said, took care that his fortunes should not suffer by his inactive life, for she made his flock increase, and guarded his sheep and lambs from the wild beasts.

The story of Endymion has a peculiar charm from the human meaning which it so thinly veils. We see in Endymion the young poet, his fancy and his heart seeking in vain for that which can satisfy them, finding his favorite hour in the quiet moonlight, and nursing there beneath the beams of the bright and silent witness the melancholy and the ardor which consumes him. The story suggests aspiring and poetic love, a life spent more in dreams than in reality, and an early and welcome death.—*S. G. B.*

The "Endymion" of Keats is a wild and fanciful poem, containing some exquisite poetry, as this, to the moon:

" . . . The sleeping kine
Couched in thy brightness dream of fields divine.
Innumerable mountains rise, and rise,
Ambitious for the hallowing of thine eyes,

And yet thy benediction passeth not
 One obscure hiding-place, one little spot
 Where pleasure may be sent; the nested wren
 Has thy fair face within its tranquil ken;" etc., etc.

Dr. Young, in the "Night Thoughts," alludes to Endymion thus:

"... These thoughts, O night, are thine;
 From thee they came like lovers' secret sighs,
 While others slept. So Cynthia, poets feign,
 In shadows veiled, soft, sliding from her sphere,
 Her shepherd cheered, of her enamoured less
 Than I of thee."

Fletcher, in the "Faithful Shepherdess," tells:

"How the pale Phœbe, hunting in a grove,
 First saw the boy Endymion, from whose eyes
 She took eternal fire that never dies;
 How she conveyed him softly in a sleep,
 His temples bound with poppy, to the steep
 Head of old Latmos, where she stoops each night,
 Gilding the mountain with her brother's light,
 To kiss her sweetest."

ORION

Orion was the son of Neptune. He was a handsome giant and a mighty hunter. His father gave him the power of wading through the depths of the sea, or, as others say, of walking on its surface.

Orion loved Merope, the daughter of Œnopion, king of Chios, and sought her in marriage. He cleared the island of wild beasts, and brought the spoils of the chase as presents to his beloved; but as Œnopion constantly deferred his consent, Orion attempted to gain possession of the maiden by violence. Her father, incensed at this conduct, having made Orion drunk, deprived him of his sight and cast him out on the seashore. The blinded hero followed the sound of a Cyclops' hammer till he reached Lemnos, and came to the forge of Vulcan, who, taking pity on him, gave him Kedalion, one of his men, to be his guide to the abode of the sun.

Placing Kedalion on his shoulders, Orion proceeded to the east, and there meeting the sun-god, was restored to sight by his beam.

After this he dwelt as a hunter with Diana, with whom he was a favorite, and it is even said she was about to marry him. Her brother was highly displeased and often chid her, but to no purpose. One day, observing Orion wading through the sea with his head just above the water, Apollo pointed it out to his sister and maintained that she could not hit that black thing on the sea. The archer-goddess discharged a shaft with fatal aim. The waves rolled the dead body of Orion to the land, and bewailing her fatal error with many tears, Diana placed him among the stars, where he appears as a giant, with a girdle, sword, lion's skin, and club. Sirius, his dog, follows him, and the Pleiads fly before him.

The Pleiads were daughters of Atlas, and nymphs of Diana's train. One day Orion saw them and became enamoured and pursued them. In their distress they prayed to the gods to change their form, and Jupiter in pity turned them into pigeons, and then made them a constellation in the sky. Though their number was seven, only six stars are visible, for Electra, one of them, it is said left her place that she might not behold the ruin of Troy, for that city was founded by her son Dardanus. The sight had such an effect on her sisters that they have looked pale ever since.

Mr. Longfellow has a poem on the "Occultation of Orion." The following lines are those in which he alludes to the mythic story. We must premise that on the celestial globe Orion is represented as robed in a lion's skin and wielding a club. At the moment the stars of the constellation, one by one, were quenched in the light of the moon, the poet tells us

"Down fell the red skin of the lion
Into the river at his feet.
His mighty club no longer beat
The forehead of the bull; but he
Reeled as of yore beside the sea,

When blinded by Cænopion
 He sought the blacksmith at his forge,
 And climbing up the narrow gorge,
 Fixed his blank eyes upon the sun."

Tennyson has a different theory of the Pleiads:

"Many a night I saw the Pleiads, rising through the mellow
 shade,
 Glitter like a swarm of fire-flies tangled in a silver braid."
 —*Locksley Hall*.

Byron alludes to the lost Pleiad:

"Like the lost Pleiad seen no more below."

See also Mrs. Hemans's verses on the same subject.

AURORA AND TITHONUS

The goddess of the Dawn, like her sister the Moon, was at times inspired with the love of mortals. Her greatest favorite was Tithonus, son of Laomedon, king of Troy. She stole him away, and prevailed on Jupiter to grant him immortality; but, forgetting to have youth joined in the gift, after some time she began to discern, to her great mortification, that he was growing old. When his hair was quite white she left his society; but he still had the range of her palace, lived on ambrosial food, and was clad in celestial raiment. At length he lost the power of using his limbs, and then she shut him up in his chamber, whence his feeble voice might at times be heard. Finally she turned him into a grasshopper.

Memnon was the son of Aurora and Tithonus. He was king of the Æthiopians, and dwelt in the extreme east, on the shore of Ocean. He came with his warriors to assist the kindred of his father in the war of Troy. King Priam received him with great honors, and listened with admiration to his narrative of the wonders of the ocean shore.

The very day after his arrival, Memnon, impatient of repose, led his troops to the field. Antilochus, the

brave son of Nestor, fell by his hand, and the Greeks were put to flight, when Achilles appeared and restored the battle. A long and doubtful contest ensued between him and the son of Aurora; at length victory declared for Achilles, Memnon fell, and the Trojans fled in dismay.

Aurora, who from her station in the sky had viewed with apprehension the danger of her son, when she saw him fall, directed his brothers, the Winds, to convey his body to the banks of the river Esepus in Paphlagonia. In the evening Aurora came, accompanied by the Hours and the Pleiads, and wept and lamented over her son. Night, in sympathy with her grief, spread the heaven with clouds; all nature mourned for the offspring of the Dawn. The Æthiopians raised his tomb on the banks of the stream in the grove of the Nymphs, and Jupiter caused the sparks and cinders of his funeral pile to be turned into birds, which, dividing into two flocks, fought over the pile till they fell into the flame. Every year at the anniversary of his death they return and celebrate his obsequies in like manner. Aurora remains inconsolable for the loss of her son. Her tears still flow, and may be seen at early morning in the form of dew-drops on the grass.

Unlike most of the marvels of ancient mythology, there still exist some memorials of this. On the banks of the river Nile, in Egypt, are two colossal statues, one of which is said to be the statue of Memnon. Ancient writers record that when the first rays of the rising sun fall upon this statue a sound is heard to issue from it, which they compare to the snapping of a harp-string. There is some doubt about the identification of the existing statue with the one described by the ancients, and the mysterious sounds are still more doubtful. Yet there are not wanting some modern testimonies to their being still audible. It has been suggested that sounds produced by confined air making its escape from crevices or caverns in the rocks may have given some ground for the story. Sir Gardner Wilkinson, a late traveller, of the highest authority, examined the statue

itself, and discovered that it was hollow, and that "in the lap of the statue is a stone, which on being struck emits a metallic sound, that might still be made use of to deceive a visitor who was predisposed to believe its powers."

The vocal statue of Memnon is a favorite subject of allusion with the poets. Darwin, in his "Botanic Garden," says:

"So to the sacred Sun in Memnon's fane
Spontaneous concords choired the matin strain;
Touched by his orient beam responsive rings
The living lyre and vibrates all its strings;
Accordant aisles the tender tones prolong,
And holy echoes swell the adoring song."

Book I., 1., 182.

ACIS AND GALATEA

Scylla was a fair virgin of Sicily, a favorite of the Sea-Nymphs. She had many suitors, but repelled them all, and would go to the grotto of Galatea, and tell her how she was persecuted. One day the goddess, while Scylla dressed her hair, listened to the story, and then replied, "Yet, maiden, your persecutors are of the not ungentle race of men, whom, if you will, you can repel; but I, the daughter of Nereus, and protected by such a band of sisters, found no escape from the passion of the Cyclops but in the depths of the sea;" and tears stopped her utterance, which when the pitying maiden had wiped away with her delicate finger, and soothed the goddess, "Tell me, dearest," said she, "the cause of your grief." Galatea then said, "Acis was the son of Faunus and a Naiad. His father and mother loved him dearly, but their love was not equal to mine. For the beautiful youth attached himself to me alone, and he was just sixteen years old, the down just beginning to darken his cheeks. As much as I sought his society, so much did the Cyclops seek mine; and if you ask me whether my love for Acis or my hatred of Polyphemus was the stronger, I cannot tell you; they were in equal measure. O Venus, how great is thy power! this fierce giant, the terror of the woods, whom no hapless stranger

escaped unharmed, who defied even Jove himself, learned to feel what love was, and, touched with a passion for me, forgot his flocks and his well-stored caverns. Then for the first time he began to take some care of his appearance, and to try to make himself agreeable; he harrowed those coarse locks of his with a comb, and mowed his beard with a sickle, looked at his harsh features in the water, and composed his countenance. His love of slaughter, his fierceness and thirst of blood prevailed no more, and ships that touched at his island went away in safety. He paced up and down the seashore, imprinting huge tracks with his heavy tread, and, when weary, lay tranquilly in his cave.

"There is a cliff which projects into the sea, which washes it on either side. Thither one day the huge Cyclops ascended, and sat down while his flocks spread themselves around. Laying down his staff, which would have served for a mast to hold a vessel's sail, and taking his instrument compacted of numerous pipes, he made the hills and the waters echo the music of his song. I lay hid under a rock by the side of my beloved Acis, and listened to the distant strain. It was full of extravagant praises of my beauty, mingled with passionate reproaches of my coldness and cruelty.

"When he had finished he rose up, and, like a raging bull that cannot stand still, wandered off into the woods. Acis and I thought no more of him, till on a sudden he came to a spot which gave him a view of us as we sat. 'I see you,' he exclaimed, 'and I will make this the last of your love-meetings.' His voice was a roar such as an angry Cyclops alone could utter. *Ætna* trembled at the sound. I, overcome with terror, plunged into the water. Acis turned and fled, crying, 'Save me, Galatea, save me, my parents!' The Cyclops pursued him, and tearing a rock from the side of the mountain hurled it at him. Though only a corner of it touched him, it overwhelmed him.

"All that fate left in my power I did for Acis. I endowed him with the honors of his grandfather, the river-god. The purple blood flowed out from under the rock, but by degrees grew paler and looked like the

stream of a river rendered turbid by rains, and in time it became clear. The rock cleaved open, and the water, as it gushed from the chasm, uttered a pleasing murmur."

Thus Acis was changed into a river, and the river retains the name of Acis.

Dryden, in his "Cymon and Iphigenia," has told the story of a clown converted into a gentleman by the power of love, in a way that shows traces of kindred to the old story of Galatea and the Cyclops.

"What not his father's care nor tutor's art
Could plant with pains in his unpolished heart,
The best instructor, Love, at once inspired,
As barren grounds to fruitfulness are fired.
Love taught him shame, and shame with love at strife
Soon taught the sweet civilities of life."

CHAPTER XXVII

THE TROJAN WAR

MINERVA was the goddess of wisdom, but on one occasion she did a very foolish thing; she entered into competition with Juno and Venus for the prize of beauty. It happened thus: At the nuptials of Peleus and Thetis all the gods were invited with the exception of Eris, or Discord. Enraged at her exclusion, the goddess threw a golden apple among the guests, with the inscription, "For the fairest." Thereupon Juno, Venus, and Minerva each claimed the apple. Jupiter, not willing to decide in so delicate a matter, sent the goddesses to Mount Ida, where the beautiful shepherd Paris was tending his flocks, and to him was committed the decision. The goddesses accordingly appeared before him. Juno promised him power and riches, Minerva glory and renown in war, and Venus the fairest of women for his wife, each attempting to bias his decision in her own favor. Paris decided in

favor of Venus and gave her the golden apple, thus making the two other goddesses his enemies. Under the protection of Venus, Paris sailed to Greece, and was hospitably received by Menelaus, king of Sparta. Now Helen, the wife of Menelaus, was the very woman whom Venus had destined for Paris, the fairest of her sex. She had been sought as a bride by numerous suitors, and before her decision was made known, they all, at the suggestion of Ulysses, one of their number, took an oath that they would defend her from all injury and avenge her cause if necessary. She chose Menelaus, and was living with him happily when Paris became their guest. Paris, aided by Venus, persuaded her to elope with him, and carried her to Troy, whence arose the famous Trojan war, the theme of the greatest poems of antiquity, those of Homer and Virgil.

Menelaus called upon his brother chieftains of Greece to fulfil their pledge, and join him in his efforts to recover his wife. They generally came forward, but Ulysses, who had married Penelope, and was very happy in his wife and child, had no disposition to embark in such a troublesome affair. He therefore hung back and Palamedes was sent to urge him. When Palamedes arrived at Ithaca Ulysses pretended to be mad. He yoked an ass and an ox together to the plough and began to sow salt. Palamedes, to try him, placed the infant Telemachus before the plough, whereupon the father turned the plough aside, showing plainly that he was no madman, and after that could no longer refuse to fulfil his promise. Being now himself gained for the undertaking, he lent his aid to bring in other reluctant chiefs, especially Achilles. This hero was the son of that Thetis at whose marriage the apple of Discord had been thrown among the goddesses. Thetis was herself one of the immortals, a sea-nymph, and knowing that her son was fated to perish before Troy if he went on the expedition, she endeavored to prevent his going. She sent him away to the court of King Lycomedes, and induced him to conceal himself in the disguise of a maiden among the daughters of the king. Ulysses, hearing he was there, went disguised as a merchant to the



AJAX.

Vatican Museum, Rome.

palace and offered for sale female ornaments, among which he had placed some arms. While the king's daughters were engrossed with the other contents of the merchant's pack, Achilles handled the weapons and thereby betrayed himself to the keen eye of Ulysses, who found no great difficulty in persuading him to disregard his mother's prudent counsels and join his countrymen in the war.

Priam was king of Troy, and Paris, the shepherd and seducer of Helen, was his son. Paris had been brought up in obscurity, because there were certain ominous forebodings connected with him from his infancy that he would be the ruin of the state. These forebodings seemed at length likely to be realized, for the Grecian armament now in preparation was the greatest that had ever been fitted out. Agamemnon, king of Mycenæ, and brother of the injured Menelaus, was chosen commander-in-chief. Achilles was their most illustrious warrior. After him ranked Ajax, gigantic in size and of great courage, but dull of intellect; Diomedes, second only to Achilles in all the qualities of a hero; Ulysses, famous for his sagacity; and Nestor, the oldest of the Grecian chiefs, and one to whom they all looked up for counsel. But Troy was no feeble enemy. Priam, the king, was now old, but he had been a wise prince and had strengthened his state by good government at home and numerous alliances with his neighbors. But the principal stay and support of his throne was his son Hector, one of the noblest characters painted by heathen antiquity. He felt, from the first, a presentiment of the fall of his country, but still persevered in his heroic resistance, yet by no means justified the wrong which brought this danger upon her. He was united in marriage with Andromache, and as a husband and father his character was not less admirable than as a warrior. The principal leaders on the side of the Trojans, besides Hector, were Æneas and Deiphobus, Glaucus and Sarpedon.

After two years of preparation the Greek fleet and army assembled in the port of Aulis in Bœotia. Here Agamemnon in hunting killed a stag which was sacred

to Diana, and the goddess in return visited the army with pestilence, and produced a calm which prevented the ships from leaving the port. Calchas, the soothsayer, thereupon announced that the wrath of the virgin goddess could only be appeased by the sacrifice of a virgin on her altar, and that none other but the daughter of the offender would be acceptable. Agamemnon, however reluctant, yielded his consent, and the maiden Iphigenia was sent for under the pretence that she was to be married to Achilles. When she was about to be sacrificed the goddess relented and snatched her away, leaving a hind in her place, and Iphigenia, enveloped in a cloud, was carried to Tauris, where Diana made her priestess of her temple.

Tennyson, in his "Dream of Fair Women," makes Iphigenia thus describe her feelings at the moment of sacrifice:

"I was cut off from hope in that sad place,
Which yet to name my spirit loathes and fears;
My father held his hand upon his face;
I, blinded by my tears,

"Still strove to speak; my voice was thick with sighs,
As in a dream. Dimly I could descry
The stern black-bearded kings, with wolfish eyes,
Waiting to see me die.

"The tall masts quivered as they lay afloat,
The temples and the people and the shore;
One drew a sharp knife through my tender throat
Slowly,—and—nothing more."

The wind now proving fair the fleet made sail and brought the forces to the coast of Troy. The Trojans came to oppose their landing, and at the first onset Protesilaus fell by the hand of Hector. Protesilaus had left at home his wife, Laodamia, who was most tenderly attached to him. When the news of his death reached her she implored the gods to be allowed to converse with him only three hours. The request was granted. Mercury led Protesilaus back to the upper world, and when he died a second time Laodamia died with him. There was a story that the nymphs planted

elm trees round his grave which grew very well till they were high enough to command a view of Troy, and then withered away, while fresh branches sprang from the roots.

Wordsworth has taken the story of Protesilaus and Laodamia for the subject of a poem. It seems the oracle had declared that victory should be the lot of that party from which should fall the first victim to the war. The poet represents Protesilaus, on his brief return to earth, as relating to Laodamia the story of his fate:

"The wished-for wind was given; I then revolved
The oracle, upon the silent sea;
And if no worthier led the way, resolved
That of a thousand vessels mine should be
The foremost prow impressing to the strand,—
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand.

"Yet bitter, oftentimes bitter was the pang
When of thy loss I thought, beloved wife!
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,
And on the joys we shared in mortal life,
The paths which we had trod,—these fountains, flowers;
My new planned cities and unfinished towers.

"But should suspense permit the foe to cry,
"Behold they tremble! haughty their array,
Yet of their number no one dares to die?"
In soul I swept the indignity away:
Old frailties then recurred: but lofty thought
In act embodied my deliverance wrought.

"... upon the side
Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)
A knot of spiry trees for ages grew
From out the tomb of him for whom she died;
And ever when such stature they had gained
That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,
The trees' tall summits withered at the sight,
A constant interchange of growth and blight!"

"THE ILIAD"

The war continued without decisive results for nine years. Then an event occurred which seemed likely to be fatal to the cause of the Greeks, and that was a

quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon. It is at this point that the great poem of Homer, "The Iliad," begins. The Greeks, though unsuccessful against Troy, had taken the neighboring and allied cities, and in the division of the spoil a female captive, by name Chryseis, daughter of Chryses, priest of Apollo, had fallen to the share of Agamemnon. Chryses came bearing the sacred emblems of his office, and begged the release of his daughter. Agamemnon refused. Thereupon Chryses implored Apollo to afflict the Greeks till they should be forced to yield their prey. Apollo granted the prayer of his priest, and sent pestilence into the Grecian camp. Then a council was called to deliberate how to allay the wrath of the gods and avert the plague. Achilles boldly charged their misfortunes upon Agamemnon as caused by his withholding Chryseis. Agamemnon, enraged, consented to relinquish his captive, but demanded that Achilles should yield to him in her stead Briseis, a maiden who had fallen to Achilles' share in the division of the spoil. Achilles submitted, but forthwith declared that he would take no further part in the war. He withdrew his forces from the general camp and openly avowed his intention of returning home to Greece.

The gods and goddesses interested themselves as much in this famous war as the parties themselves. It was well known to them that fate had decreed that Troy should fall, at last, if her enemies should persevere and not voluntarily abandon the enterprise. Yet there was room enough left for chance to excite by turns the hopes and fears of the powers above who took part with either side. Juno and Minerva, in consequence of the slight put upon their charms by Paris, were hostile to the Trojans; Venus for the opposite cause favored them. Venus enlisted her admirer Mars on the same side, but Neptune favored the Greeks. Apollo was neutral, sometimes taking one side, sometimes the other, and Jove himself, though he loved the good King Priam, yet exercised a degree of impartiality; not, however, without exceptions.

Thetis, the mother of Achilles, warmly resented the injury done to her son. She repaired immediately to

Jove's palace and besought him to make the Greeks repent of their injustice to Achilles by granting success to the Trojan arms. Jupiter consented, and in the battle which ensued the Trojans were completely successful. The Greeks were driven from the field and took refuge in their ships.

Then Agamemnon called a council of his wisest and bravest chiefs. Nestor advised that an embassy should be sent to Achilles to persuade him to return to the field; that Agamemnon should yield the maiden, the cause of the dispute, with ample gifts to atone for the wrong he had done. Agamemnon consented, and Ulysses, Ajax, and Phoenix were sent to carry to Achilles the penitent message. They performed that duty, but Achilles was deaf to their entreaties. He positively refused to return to the field, and persisted in his resolution to embark for Greece without delay.

The Greeks had constructed a rampart around their ships, and now instead of besieging Troy they were in a manner besieged themselves, within their rampart. The next day after the unsuccessful embassy to Achilles, a battle was fought, and the Trojans, favored by Jove, were successful, and succeeded in forcing a passage through the Grecian rampart, and were about to set fire to the ships. Neptune, seeing the Greeks so pressed, came to their rescue. He appeared in the form of Calchas the prophet, encouraged the warriors with his shouts, and appealed to each individually till he raised their ardor to such a pitch that they forced the Trojans to give way. Ajax performed prodigies of valor, and at length encountered Hector. Ajax shouted defiance, to which Hector replied, and hurled his lance at the huge warrior. It was well aimed and struck Ajax, where the belts that bore his sword and shield crossed each other on the breast. The double guard prevented its penetrating and it fell harmless. Then Ajax, seizing a huge stone, one of those that served to prop the ships, hurled it at Hector. It struck him in the neck and stretched him on the plain. His followers instantly seized him and bore him off, stunned and wounded.

While Neptune was thus aiding the Greeks and driving back the Trojans, Jupiter saw nothing of what was going on, for his attention had been drawn from the field by the wiles of Juno. That goddess had arrayed herself in all her charms, and to crown all had borrowed of Venus her girdle, called "Cestus," which had the effect to heighten the wearer's charms to such a degree that they were quite irresistible. So prepared, Juno went to join her husband, who sat on Olympus watching the battle. When he beheld her she looked so charming that the fondness of his early love revived, and, forgetting the contending armies and all other affairs of state, he thought only of her and let the battle go as it would.

But this absorption did not continue long, and when, upon turning his eyes downward, he beheld Hector stretched on the plain almost lifeless from pain and bruises, he dismissed Juno in a rage, commanding her to send Iris and Apollo to him. When Iris came he sent her with a stern message to Neptune, ordering him instantly to quit the field. Apollo was despatched to heal Hector's bruises and to inspirit his heart. These orders were obeyed with such speed that, while the battle still raged, Hector returned to the field and Neptune betook himself to his own dominions.

An arrow from Paris's bow wounded Machaon, son of Æsculapius, who inherited his father's art of healing, and was therefore of great value to the Greeks as their surgeon, besides being one of their bravest warriors. Nestor took Machaon in his chariot and conveyed him from the field. As they passed the ships of Achilles, that hero, looking out over the field, saw the chariot of Nestor and recognized the old chief, but could not discern who the wounded chief was. So calling Patroclus, his companion and dearest friend, he sent him to Nestor's tent to inquire.

Patroclus, arriving at Nestor's tent, saw Machaon wounded, and having told the cause of his coming would have hastened away, but Nestor detained him, to tell him the extent of the Grecian calamities. He reminded him also how, at the time of departing for Troy, Achilles



PARTING OF HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE.

From painting by A. Maignan.

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and himself had been charged by their respective fathers with different advice: Achilles to aspire to the highest pitch of glory, Patroclus, as the elder, to keep watch over his friend, and to guide his inexperience. "Now," said Nestor, "is the time for such influence. If the gods so please, thou mayest win him back to the common cause; but if not let him at least send his soldiers to the field, and come thou, Patroclus, clad in his armor, and perhaps the very sight of it may drive back the Trojans."

Patroclus was strongly moved with this address, and hastened back to Achilles, revolving in his mind all he had seen and heard. He told the prince the sad condition of affairs at the camp of their late associates: Diomedes, Ulysses, Agamemnon, Machaon, all wounded, the rampart broken down, the enemy among the ships preparing to burn them, and thus to cut off all means of return to Greece. While they spoke the flames burst forth from one of the ships. Achilles, at the sight, relented so far as to grant Patroclus his request to lead the Myrmidons (for so were Achilles' soldiers called) to the field, and to lend him his armor, that he might thereby strike more terror into the minds of the Trojans. Without delay the soldiers were marshalled, Patroclus put on the radiant armor and mounted the chariot of Achilles, and led forth the men ardent for battle. But before he went, Achilles strictly charged him that he should be content with repelling the foe. "Seek not," said he, "to press the Trojans without me, lest thou add still more to the disgrace already mine." Then exhorting the troops to do their best he dismissed them full of ardor to the fight.

Patroclus and his Myrmidons at once plunged into the contest where it raged hottest; at the sight of which the joyful Grecians shouted and the ships reëchoed the acclaim. The Trojans, at the sight of the well-known armor, struck with terror, looked everywhere for refuge. First those who had got possession of the ship and set it on fire left and allowed the Grecians to retake it and extinguish the flames. Then the rest of the Trojans fled in dismay. Ajax, Menelaus, and the two sons of Nestor

performed prodigies of valor. Hector was forced to turn his horses' heads and retire from the enclosure, leaving his men entangled in the fosse to escape as they could. Patroclus drove them before him, slaying many, none daring to make a stand against him.

At last Sarpedon, son of Jove, ventured to oppose himself in fight to Patroclus. Jupiter looked down upon him and would have snatched him from the fate which awaited him, but Juno hinted that if he did so it would induce all others of the inhabitants of heaven to interpose in like manner whenever any of their offspring were endangered; to which reason Jove yielded. Sarpedon threw his spear, but missed Patroclus, but Patroclus threw his with better success. It pierced Sarpedon's breast and he fell, and, calling to his friends to save his body from the foe, expired. Then a furious contest arose for the possession of the corpse. The Greeks succeeded and stripped Sarpedon of his armor; but Jove would not allow the remains of his son to be dishonored, and by his command Apollo snatched from the midst of the combatants the body of Sarpedon and committed it to the care of the twin brothers Death and Sleep, by whom it was transported to Lycia, the native land of Sarpedon, where it received due funeral rites.

Thus far Patroclus had succeeded to his utmost wish in repelling the Trojans and relieving his countrymen, but now came a change of fortune. Hector, borne in his chariot, confronted him. Patroclus threw a vast stone at Hector, which missed its aim, but smote Cebriones, the charioteer, and knocked him from the car. Hector leaped from the chariot to rescue his friend, and Patroclus also descended to complete his victory. Thus the two heroes met face to face. At this decisive moment the poet, as if reluctant to give Hector the glory, records that Phœbus took part against Patroclus. He struck the helmet from his head and the lance from his hand. At the same moment an obscure Trojan wounded him in the back, and Hector, pressing forward, pierced him with his spear. He fell mortally wounded.

Then arose a tremendous conflict for the body of

Patroclus, but his armor was at once taken possession of by Hector, who retiring a short distance divested himself of his own armor and put on that of Achilles, then returned to the fight. Ajax and Menelaus defended the body, and Hector and his bravest warriors struggled to capture it. The battle raged with equal fortunes, when Jove enveloped the whole face of heaven with a dark cloud. The lightning flashed, the thunder roared, and Ajax, looking round for some one whom he might despatch to Achilles to tell him of the death of his friend, and of the imminent danger that his remains would fall into the hands of the enemy, could see no suitable messenger. It was then that he exclaimed in those famous lines so often quoted,

"Father of heaven and earth! deliver thou
Achaia's host from darkness; clear the skies;
Give day; and, since thy sovereign will is such,
Destruction with it; but, O, give us day."

—*Cowper.*

Or, as rendered by Pope,

"... Lord of earth and air!
O king! O father! hear my humble prayer!
Dispel this cloud, the light of heaven restore;
Give me to see and Ajax asks no more;
If Greece must perish we thy will obey,
But let us perish in the face of day."

Jupiter heard the prayer and dispersed the clouds. Then Ajax sent Antilochus to Achilles with the intelligence of Patroclus's death, and of the conflict raging for his remains. The Greeks at last succeeded in bearing off the body to the ships, closely pursued by Hector and Æneas and the rest of the Trojans.

Achilles heard the fate of his friend with such distress that Antilochus feared for a while that he would destroy himself. His groans reached the ears of his mother, Thetis, far down in the deeps of ocean where she abode, and she hastened to him to inquire the cause. She found him overwhelmed with self-reproach that he had indulged his resentment so far, and suffered his friend to fall a victim to it. But his only consolation

was the hope of revenge. He would fly instantly in search of Hector. But his mother reminded him that he was now without armor, and promised him, if he would but wait till the morrow, she would procure for him a suit of armor from Vulcan more than equal to that he had lost. He consented, and Thetis immediately repaired to Vulcan's palace. She found him busy at his forge making tripods for his own use, so artfully constructed that they moved forward of their own accord when wanted, and retired again when dismissed. On hearing the request of Thetis, Vulcan immediately laid aside his work and hastened to comply with her wishes. He fabricated a splendid suit of armor for Achilles, first a shield adorned with elaborate devices, then a helmet crested with gold, then a corselet and greaves of impenetrable temper, all perfectly adapted to his form, and of consummate workmanship. It was all done in one night, and Thetis, receiving it, descended with it to earth, and laid it down at Achilles' feet at the dawn of day.

The first glow of pleasure that Achilles had felt since the death of Patroclus was at the sight of this splendid armor. And now, arrayed in it, he went forth into the camp, calling all the chiefs to council. When they were all assembled he addressed them. Renouncing his displeasure against Agamemnon and bitterly lamenting the miseries that had resulted from it, he called on them to proceed at once to the field. Agamemnon made a suitable reply, laying all the blame on Ate, the goddess of discord; and thereupon complete reconciliation took place between the heroes.

Then Achilles went forth to battle inspired with a rage and thirst for vengeance that made him irresistible. The bravest warriors fled before him or fell by his lance. Hector, cautioned by Apollo, kept aloof; but the god, assuming the form of one of Priam's sons, Lycaon, urged Æneas to encounter the terrible warrior. Æneas, though he felt himself unequal, did not decline the combat. He hurled his spear with all his force against the shield the work of Vulcan. It was formed of five metal plates; two were of brass, two



THETIS BEARING THE ARMOR OF ACHILLES.

From painting by François Gérard.

of tin, and one of gold. The spear pierced two thicknesses, but was stopped in the third. Achilles threw his with better success. It pierced through the shield of Æneas, but glanced near his shoulder and made no wound. Then Æneas seized a stone, such as two men of modern times could hardly lift, and was about to throw it, and Achilles, with sword drawn, was about to rush upon him, when Neptune, who looked out upon the contest, moved with pity for Æneas, who he saw would surely fall a victim if not speedily rescued, spread a cloud between the combatants, and lifting Æneas from the ground, bore him over the heads of warriors and steeds to the rear of the battle. Achilles, when the mist cleared away, looked round in vain for his adversary, and acknowledging the prodigy, turned his arms against other champions. But none dared stand before him, and Priam looking down from the city walls beheld his whole army in full flight towards the city. He gave command to open wide the gates to receive the fugitives, and to shut them as soon as the Trojans should have passed, lest the enemy should enter likewise. But Achilles was so close in pursuit that that would have been impossible if Apollo had not, in the form of Agenor, Priam's son, encountered Achilles for a while, then turned to fly, and taken the way apart from the city. Achilles pursued and had chased his supposed victim far from the walls, when Apollo disclosed himself, and Achilles, perceiving how he had been deluded, gave up the chase.

But when the rest had escaped into the town Hector stood without determined to await the combat. His old father called to him from the walls and begged him to retire nor tempt the encounter. His mother, Hecuba, also besought him to the same effect, but all in vain. “How can I,” said he to himself, “by whose command the people went to this day's contest, where so many have fallen, seek safety for myself against a single foe? But what if I offer him to yield up Helen and all her treasures and ample of our own beside? Ah, no! it is too late. He would not even hear me through, but slay me while I spoke.” While he thus ruminated, Achilles

approached, terrible as Mars, his armor flashing lightning as he moved. At that sight Hector's heart failed him and he fled. Achilles swiftly pursued. They ran, still keeping near the walls, till they had thrice encircled the city. As often as Hector approached the walls Achilles intercepted him and forced him to keep out in a wider circle. But Apollo sustained Hector's strength and would not let him sink in weariness. Then Pallas, assuming the form of Deiphobus, Hector's bravest brother, appeared suddenly at his side. Hector saw him with delight, and thus strengthened stopped his flight and turned to meet Achilles. Hector threw his spear, which struck the shield of Achilles and bounded back. He turned to receive another from the hand of Deiphobus, but Deiphobus was gone. Then Hector understood his doom and said, "Alas! it is plain this is my hour to die! I thought Deiphobus at hand, but Pallas deceived me, and he is still in Troy. But I will not fall inglorious." So saying he drew his falchion from his side and rushed at once to combat. Achilles, secured behind his shield, waited the approach of Hector. When he came within reach of his spear, Achilles choosing with his eye a vulnerable part where the armor leaves the neck uncovered, aimed his spear at that part and Hector fell, death-wounded, and feebly said, "Spare my body! Let my parents ransom it, and let me receive funeral rites from the sons and daughters of Troy." To which Achilles replied, "Dog, name not ransom nor pity to me, on whom you have brought such dire distress. No! trust me, naught shall save thy carcass from the dogs. Though twenty ransoms and thy weight in gold were offered, I would refuse it all."

So saying he stripped the body of its armor, and fastening cords to the feet tied them behind his chariot, leaving the body to trail along the ground. Then mounting the chariot he lashed the steeds and so dragged the body to and fro before the city. What words can tell the grief of King Priam and Queen Hecuba at this sight! His people could scarce restrain the old king from rushing forth. He threw himself in the dust and besought them each by name to give him way. Hec-

uba's distress was not less violent. The citizens stood round them weeping. The sound of the mourning reached the ears of Andromache, the wife of Hector, as she sat among her maidens at work, and anticipating evil she went forth to the wall. When she saw the sight there presented, she would have thrown herself headlong from the wall, but fainted and fell into the arms of her maidens. Recovering, she bewailed her fate, picturing to herself her country ruined, herself a captive, and her son dependent for his bread on the charity of strangers.

When Achilles and the Greeks had taken their revenge on the killer of Patroclus they busied themselves in paying due funeral rites to their friend. A pile was erected, and the body burned with due solemnity; and then ensued games of strength and skill, chariot races, wrestling, boxing, and archery. Then the chiefs sat down to the funeral banquet and after that retired to rest. But Achilles neither partook of the feast nor of sleep. The recollection of his lost friend kept him awake, remembering their companionship in toil and dangers, in battle or on the perilous deep. Before the earliest dawn he left his tent, and joining to his chariot his swift steeds, he fastened Hector's body to be dragged behind. Twice he dragged him around the tomb of Patroclus, leaving him at length stretched in the dust. But Apollo would not permit the body to be torn or disfigured with all this abuse, but preserved it free from all taint or defilement.

While Achilles indulged his wrath in thus disgracing brave Hector, Jupiter in pity summoned Thetis to his presence. He told her to go to her son and prevail on him to restore the body of Hector to his friends. Then Jupiter sent Iris to King Priam to encourage him to go to Achilles and beg the body of his son. Iris delivered her message, and Priam immediately prepared to obey. He opened his treasures and took out rich garments and cloths, with ten talents in gold and two splendid tripods and a golden cup of matchless workmanship. Then he called to his sons and bade them draw forth his litter and place in it the various articles designed for a ransom

to Achilles. When all was ready, the old king with a single companion as aged as himself, the herald Idæus, drove forth from the gates, parting there with Hecuba, his queen, and all his friends, who lamented him as going to certain death.

But Jupiter, beholding with compassion the venerable king, sent Mercury to be his guide and protector. Mercury, assuming the form of a young warrior, presented himself to the aged couple, and while at the sight of him they hesitated whether to fly or yield, the god approached, and grasping Priam's hand offered to be their guide to Achilles' tent. Priam gladly accepted his offered service, and he, mounting the carriage, assumed the reins and soon conveyed them to the tent of Achilles. Mercury's wand put to sleep all the guards, and without hinderance he introduced Priam into the tent where Achilles sat, attended by two of his warriors. The old king threw himself at the feet of Achilles, and kissed those terrible hands which had destroyed so many of his sons. "Think, O Achilles," he said, "of thy own father, full of days like me, and trembling on the gloomy verge of life. Perhaps even now some neighbor chief oppresses him and there is none at hand to succor him in his distress. Yet doubtless knowing that Achilles lives he still rejoices, hoping that one day he shall see thy face again. But no comfort cheers me, whose bravest sons, so late the flower of Ilium, all have fallen. Yet one I had, one more than all the rest the strength of my age, whom, fighting for his country, thou hast slain. I come to redeem his body, bringing inestimable ransom with me. Achilles! reverence the gods! recollect thy father! for his sake show compassion to me!" These words moved Achilles, and he wept; remembering by turns his absent father and his lost friend. Moved with pity of Priam's silver locks and beard, he raised him from the earth, and thus spake: "Priam, I know that thou hast reached this place conducted by some god, for without aid divine no mortal even in his prime of youth had dared the attempt. I grant thy request, moved thereto by the evident will of Jove." So saying he arose, and went forth with his two friends, and unloaded of its charge

the litter, leaving two mantles and a robe for the covering of the body, which they placed on the litter, and spread the garments over it, that not unveiled it should be borne back to Troy. Then Achilles dismissed the old king with his attendants, having first pledged himself to allow a truce of twelve days for the funeral solemnities.

As the litter approached the city and was descried from the walls, the people poured forth to gaze once more on the face of their hero. Foremost of all, the mother and the wife of Hector came, and at the sight of the lifeless body renewed their lamentations. The people all wept with them, and to the going down of the sun there was no pause or abatement of their grief.

The next day preparations were made for the funeral solemnities. For nine days the people brought wood and built the pile, and on the tenth they placed the body on the summit and applied the torch; while all Troy thronging forth encompassed the pile. When it had completely burned, they quenched the cinders with wine, collected the bones and placed them in a golden urn, which they buried in the earth, and reared a pile of stones over the spot.

"Such honors Ilium to her hero paid,
And peaceful slept the mighty Hector's shade."
—*Pope.*

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE FALL OF TROY—RETURN OF THE GREEKS—ORESTES
AND ELECTRA

THE FALL OF TROY

THE story of the Iliad ends with the death of Hector, and it is from the Odyssey and later poems that we learn the fate of the other heroes. After the death of Hector, Troy did not immediately fall, but receiving aid from new allies still continued its resistance. One of these allies was Memnon, the Æthiopian prince,

whose story we have already told. Another was Penthesilea, queen of the Amazons, who came with a band of female warriors. All the authorities attest their valor and the fearful effect of their war cry. Penthesilea slew many of the bravest warriors, but was at last slain by Achilles. But when the hero bent over his fallen foe, and contemplated her beauty, youth, and valor, he bitterly regretted his victory. Thersites, an insolent brawler and demagogue, ridiculed his grief, and was in consequence slain by the hero.

Achilles by chance had seen Polyxena, daughter of King Priam, perhaps on the occasion of the truce which was allowed the Trojans for the burial of Hector. He was captivated with her charms, and to win her in marriage agreed to use his influence with the Greeks to grant peace to Troy. While in the temple of Apollo, negotiating the marriage, Paris discharged at him a poisoned arrow, which, guided by Apollo, wounded Achilles in the heel, the only vulnerable part about him. For Thetis his mother had dipped him when an infant in the river Styx, which made every part of him invulnerable except the heel by which she held him.¹

The body of Achilles so treacherously slain was rescued by Ajax and Ulysses. Thetis directed the Greeks to bestow her son's armor on the hero who of all the survivors should be judged most deserving of it. Ajax and Ulysses were the only claimants; a select number of the other chiefs were appointed to award the prize. It was awarded to Ulysses, thus placing wisdom before valor; whereupon Ajax slew himself. On the spot where his blood sank into the earth a flower sprang up, called the hyacinth, bearing on its leaves the first two letters of the name of Ajax, Ai, the Greek for "woe." Thus Ajax is a claimant with the boy Hyacinthus for the honor of giving birth to this flower. There is a species of Larkspur which represents the hyacinth of the poets in preserving the memory of this event, the Delphinium Ajacis—Ajax's Larkspur.

¹ The story of the invulnerability of Achilles is not found in Homer, and is inconsistent with his account. For how could Achilles require the aid of celestial armor if he were invulnerable?

It was now discovered that Troy could not be taken but by the aid of the arrows of Hercules. They were in possession of Philoctetes, the friend who had been with Hercules at the last and lighted his funeral pyre. Philoctetes had joined the Grecian expedition against Troy, but had accidentally wounded his foot with one of the poisoned arrows, and the smell from his wound proved so offensive that his companions carried him to the isle of Lemnos and left him there. Diomed was now sent to induce him to rejoin the army. He succeeded. Philoctetes was cured of his wound by Machaon, and Paris was the first victim of the fatal arrows. In his distress Paris bethought him of one whom in his prosperity he had forgotten. This was the nymph C  none, whom he had married when a youth, and had abandoned for the fatal beauty Helen. C  none, remembering the wrongs she had suffered, refused to heal the wound, and Paris went back to Troy and died. C  none quickly repented, and hastened after him with remedies, but came too late, and in her grief hung herself.¹

There was in Troy a celebrated statue of Minerva called the Palladium. It was said to have fallen from heaven, and the belief was that the city could not be taken so long as this statue remained within it. Ulysses and Diomed entered the city in disguise and succeeded in obtaining the Palladium, which they carried off to the Grecian camp.

But Troy still held out, and the Greeks began to despair of ever subduing it by force, and by advice of Ulysses resolved to resort to stratagem. They pretended to be making preparations to abandon the siege, and a portion of the ships were withdrawn and lay hid behind a neighboring island. The Greeks then constructed an immense *wooden horse*, which they gave out was intended as a propitiatory offering to Minerva, but in fact was filled with armed men. The remaining Greeks then betook themselves to their ships and sailed away, as if for a final departure. The Trojans, seeing the en-

¹ Tennyson has chosen C  none as the subject of a short poem; but he has omitted the most poetical part of the story, the return of Paris wounded, her cruelty and subsequent repentance.

campment broken up and the fleet gone, concluded the enemy to have abandoned the siege. The gates were thrown open, and the whole population issued forth rejoicing at the long-prohibited liberty of passing freely over the scene of the late encampment. The great horse was the chief object of curiosity. All wondered what it could be for. Some recommended to take it into the city as a trophy; others felt afraid of it.

While they hesitate, Laocoön, the priest of Neptune, exclaims, "What madness, citizens, is this? Have you not learned enough of Grecian fraud to be on your guard against it? For my part, I fear the Greeks even when they offer gifts."¹ So saying he threw his lance at the horse's side. It struck, and a hollow sound reverberated like a groan. Then perhaps the people might have taken his advice and destroyed the fatal horse and all its contents; but just at that moment a group of people appeared, dragging forward one who seemed a prisoner and a Greek. Stupefied with terror, he was brought before the chiefs, who reassured him, promising that his life should be spared on condition of his returning true answers to the questions asked him. He informed them that he was a Greek, Sinon by name, and that in consequence of the malice of Ulysses he had been left behind by his countrymen at their departure. With regard to the wooden horse, he told them that it was a propitiatory offering to Minerva, and made so huge for the express purpose of preventing its being carried within the city; for Calchas the prophet had told them that if the Trojans took possession of it they would assuredly triumph over the Greeks. This language turned the tide of the people's feelings and they began to think how they might best secure the monstrous horse and the favorable auguries connected with it, when suddenly a prodigy occurred which left no room to doubt. There appeared, advancing over the sea, two immense serpents. They came upon the land, and the crowd fled in all directions. The serpents advanced directly to the spot where Laocoön stood with his two sons. They first attacked the children, winding

¹ See Proverbial Expressions.

round their bodies and breathing their pestilential breath in their faces. The father, attempting to rescue them, is next seized and involved in the serpents' coils. He struggles to tear them away, but they overpower all his efforts and strangle him and the children in their poisonous folds. This event was regarded as a clear indication of the displeasure of the gods at Laocoön's irreverent treatment of the wooden horse, which they no longer hesitated to regard as a sacred object, and prepared to introduce with due solemnity into the city. This was done with songs and triumphal acclamations, and the day closed with festivity. In the night the armed men who were enclosed in the body of the horse, being let out by the traitor Sinon, opened the gates of the city to their friends, who had returned under cover of the night. The city was set on fire; the people, overcome with feasting and sleep, put to the sword, and Troy completely subdued.

One of the most celebrated groups of statuary in existence is that of Laocoön and his children in the embrace of the serpents. A cast of it is owned by the Boston Athenæum; the original is in the Vatican at Rome. The following lines are from the "Childe Harold" of Byron:

"Now turning to the Vatican go see
Laocoön's torture dignifying pain;
A father's love and mortal's agony
With an immortal's patience blending;—vain
The struggle! vain against the coiling strain
And gripe and deepening of the dragon's grasp
The old man's clinch; the long envenomed chain
Rivets the living links; the enormous asp
Enforces pang on pang and stifles gasp on gasp."

The comic poets will also occasionally borrow a classical allusion. The following is from Swift's "Description of a City Shower":

"Boxed in a chair the beau impatient sits,
While spouts run clattering o'er the roof by fits,
And ever and anon with frightful din
The leather sounds; he trembles from within.

So when Troy chairmen bore the wooden steed
Pregnant with Greeks impatient to be freed,
(Those bully Greeks, who, as the moderns do,
Instead of paying chairmen, run them through);
Laocoön struck the outside with a spear,
And each imprisoned champion quaked with fear."

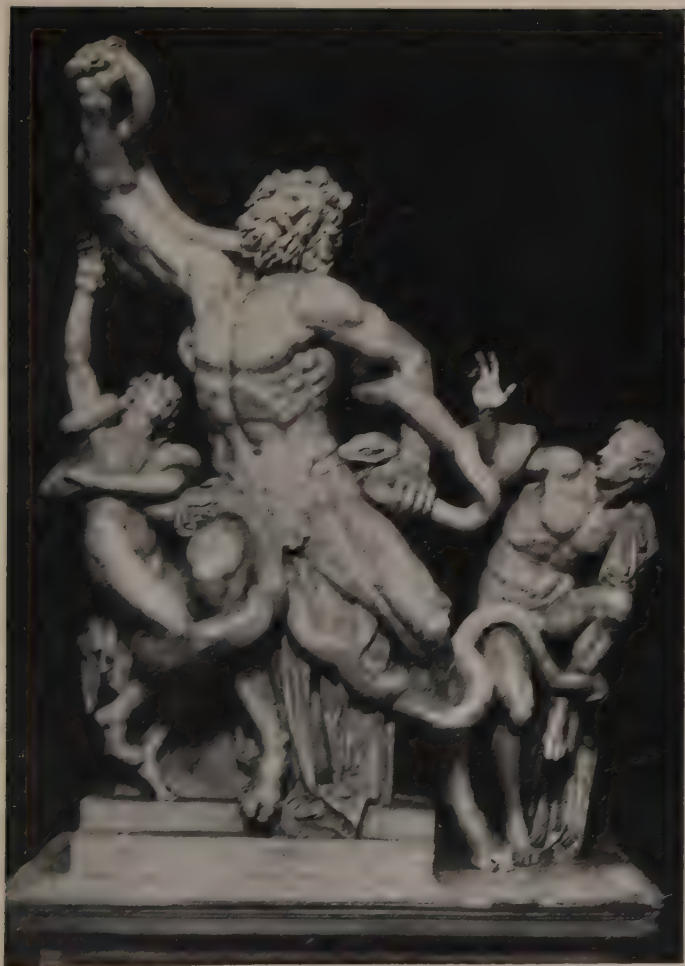
King Priam lived to see the downfall of his kingdom and was slain at last on the fatal night when the Greeks took the city. He had armed himself and was about to mingle with the combatants, but was prevailed on by Hecuba, his aged queen, to take refuge with herself and his daughters as a suppliant at the altar of Jupiter. While there, his youngest son Polites, pursued by Pyrrhus, the son of Achilles, rushed in wounded, and expired at the feet of his father; whereupon Priam, overcome with indignation, hurled his spear with feeble hand against Pyrrhus,¹ and was forthwith slain by him.

Queen Hecuba and her daughter Cassandra were carried captives to Greece. Cassandra had been loved by Apollo, and he gave her the gift of prophecy; but afterwards offended with her, he rendered the gift unavailing by ordaining that her predictions should never be believed. Polyxena, another daughter, who had been loved by Achilles, was demanded by the ghost of that warrior, and was sacrificed by the Greeks upon his tomb.

MENELAUS AND HELEN

Our readers will be anxious to know the fate of Helen, the fair but guilty occasion of so much slaughter. On the fall of Troy Menelaus recovered possession of his wife, who had not ceased to love him, though she had yielded to the might of Venus and deserted him for another. After the death of Paris she aided the Greeks secretly on several occasions, and in particular when Ulysses and Diomed entered the city in disguise to carry off the Palladium. She saw and recognized Ulysses, but kept the secret and even assisted them in obtaining the image. Thus she became reconciled to

¹ Pyrrhus's exclamation, "Not such aid nor such defenders does the time require," has become proverbial. See Proverbial Expressions.



LAOCOON WITH SONS.

Vatican Museum, Rome.

her husband, and they were among the first to leave the shores of Troy for their native land. But having incurred the displeasure of the gods they were driven by storms from shore to shore of the Mediterranean, visiting Cyprus, Phœnicia, and Egypt. In Egypt they were kindly treated and presented with rich gifts, of which Helen's share was a golden spindle and a basket on wheels. The basket was to hold the wool and spools for the queen's work.

Dyer, in his poem of the "Fleece," thus alludes to this incident:

"... many yet adhere
To the ancient distaff, at the bosom fixed,
Casting the whirling spindle as they walk.
.
.
.
This was of old, in no inglorious days,
The mode of spinning, when the Egyptian prince
A golden distaff gave that beauteous nymph,
Too beauteous Helen; no uncourtly gift."

Milton also alludes to a famous recipe for an invigorating draught, called Nepenthe, which the Egyptian queen gave to Helen:

"Not that Nepenthes which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly or so cool to thirst."
—*Comus*.

Menelaus and Helen at length arrived in safety at Sparta, resumed their royal dignity, and lived and reigned in splendor; and when Telemachus, the son of Ulysses, in search of his father, arrived at Sparta, he found Menelaus and Helen celebrating the marriage of their daughter Hermione to Neoptolemus, son of Achilles.

AGAMEMNON, ORESTES, AND ELECTRA

Agamemnon, the general-in-chief of the Greeks, the brother of Menelaus, and who had been drawn into the quarrel to avenge his brother's wrongs, not his own,

was not so fortunate in the issue. During his absence his wife Clytemnestra had been false to him, and when his return was expected, she with her paramour, Ægisthus, laid a plan for his destruction, and at the banquet given to celebrate his return, murdered him.

It was intended by the conspirators to slay his son Orestes also, a lad not yet old enough to be an object of apprehension, but from whom, if he should be suffered to grow up, there might be danger. Electra, the sister of Orestes, saved her brother's life by sending him secretly away to his uncle Strophius, King of Phocis. In the palace of Strophius Orestes grew up with the king's son Pylades, and formed with him that ardent friendship which has become proverbial. Electra frequently reminded her brother by messengers of the duty of avenging his father's death, and when grown up he consulted the oracle of Delphi, which confirmed him in his design. He therefore repaired in disguise to Argos, pretending to be a messenger from Strophius, who had come to announce the death of Orestes, and brought the ashes of the deceased in a funeral urn. After visiting his father's tomb and sacrificing upon it, according to the rites of the ancients, he made himself known to his sister Electra, and soon after slew both Ægisthus and Clytemnestra.

This revolting act, the slaughter of a mother by her son, though alleviated by the guilt of the victim and the express command of the gods, did not fail to awaken in the breasts of the ancients the same abhorrence that it does in ours. The Eumenides, avenging deities, seized upon Orestes, and drove him frantic from land to land. Pylades accompanied him in his wanderings and watched over him. At length, in answer to a second appeal to the oracle, he was directed to go to Tauris in Scythia, and to bring thence a statue of Diana which was believed to have fallen from heaven. Accordingly Orestes and Pylades went to Tauris, where the barbarous people were accustomed to sacrifice to the goddess all strangers who fell into their hands. The two friends were seized and carried bound to the temple to be made victims. But the priestess of Diana was no other than

Iphigenia, the sister of Orestes, who, our readers will remember, was snatched away by Diana at the moment when she was about to be sacrificed. Ascertaining from the prisoners who they were, Iphigenia disclosed herself to them, and the three made their escape with the statue of the goddess, and returned to Mycenæ.

But Orestes was not yet relieved from the vengeance of the Erinyes. At length he took refuge with Minerva at Athens. The goddess afforded him protection, and appointed the court of Areopagus to decide his fate. The Erinyes brought forward their accusation, and Orestes made the command of the Delphic oracle his excuse. When the court voted and the voices were equally divided, Orestes was acquitted by the command of Minerva.

Byron, in "Childe Harold," Canto IV., alludes to the story of Orestes:

"O thou who never yet of human wrong
Left the unbalanced scale, great Nemesis!
Thou who didst call the Furies from the abyss,
And round Orestes bade them howl and hiss,
For that unnatural retribution,—just,
Had it but been from hands less near,—in this,
Thy former realm, I call thee from the dust!"

One of the most pathetic scenes in the ancient drama is that in which Sophocles represents the meeting of Orestes and Electra, on his return from Phocis. Orestes, mistaking Electra for one of the domestics, and desirous of keeping his arrival a secret till the hour of vengeance should arrive, produces the urn in which his ashes are supposed to rest. Electra, believing him to be really dead, takes the urn and, embracing it, pours forth her grief in language full of tenderness and despair.

Milton, in one of his sonnets, says:

"... The repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet had the power
To save the Athenian walls from ruin bare."

This alludes to the story that when, on one occasion, the city of Athens was at the mercy of her Spartan foes, and it was proposed to destroy it, the thought was rejected upon the accidental quotation, by some one, of a chorus of Euripides.

TROY

After hearing so much about the city of Troy and its heroes, the reader will perhaps be surprised to learn that the exact site of that famous city is still a matter of dispute. There are some vestiges of tombs on the plain which most nearly answers to the description given by Homer and the ancient geographers, but no other evidence of the former existence of a great city. Byron thus describes the present appearance of the scene:

“The winds are high, and Helle’s tide
Rolls darkly heaving to the main;
And night’s descending shadows hide
That field with blood bedewed in vain,
The desert of old Priam’s pride,
The tombs, sole relics of his reign,
All—save immortal dreams that could beguile
The blind old man of Scio’s rocky isle.”
—*Bride of Abydos.*

CHAPTER XXIX

ADVENTURES OF ULYSSES—THE LOTUS-EATERS—CYCLOPES
—CIRCE—SIRENS—SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS—CALYPSO

RETURN OF ULYSSES

THE romantic poem of the Odyssey is now to engage our attention. It narrates the wanderings of Ulysses (Odysseus in the Greek language) in his return from Troy to his own kingdom Ithaca.

From Troy the vessels first made land at Ismarus, city of the Ciconians, where, in a skirmish with the inhabitants, Ulysses lost six men from each ship. Sailing thence, they were overtaken by a storm which drove

them for nine days along the sea till they reached the country of the Lotus-eaters. Here, after watering, Ulysses sent three of his men to discover who the inhabitants were. These men on coming among the Lotus-eaters were kindly entertained by them, and were given some of their own food, the lotus-plant, to eat. The effect of this food was such that those who partook of it lost all thoughts of home and wished to remain in that country. It was by main force that Ulysses dragged these men away, and he was even obliged to tie them under the benches of the ships.¹

They next arrived at the country of the Cyclopes. The Cyclopes were giants, who inhabited an island of which they were the only possessors. The name means "round eye," and these giants were so called because they had but one eye, and that placed in the middle of the forehead. They dwelt in caves and fed on the wild productions of the island and on what their flocks yielded, for they were shepherds. Ulysses left the main body of his ships at anchor, and with one vessel went to the Cyclopes' island to explore for supplies. He landed with his companions, carrying with them a jar of wine for a present, and coming to a large cave they entered it, and finding no one within examined its contents. They found it stored with the richest of the flock, quantities of cheese, pails and bowls of milk, lambs and kids in their pens, all in nice order. Presently arrived the master of the cave, Polyphemus, bearing an immense bundle of firewood, which he threw down before the cavern's mouth. He then drove into the cave

¹ Tennyson in the "Lotus-eaters" has charmingly expressed the dreamy, languid feeling which the lotus food is said to have produced.

"How sweet it were, hearing the downward stream
 With half-shut eyes ever to seem
 Falling asleep in a half dream!
 To dream and dream, like yonder amber light
 Which will not leave the myrrh-bush on the height;
 To hear each others' whispered speech;
 Eating the Lotos, day by day,
 To watch the crisping ripples on the beach,
 And tender curving lines of creamy spray:
 To lend our hearts and spirits wholly
 To the influence of mild-minded melancholy;
 To muse and brood and live again in memory,
 With those old faces of our infancy
 Heaped over with a mound of grass,
 Two handfuls of white dust, shut in an urn of brass."

the sheep and goats to be milked, and, entering, rolled to the cave's mouth an enormous rock, that twenty oxen could not draw. Next he sat down and milked his ewes, preparing a part for cheese, and setting the rest aside for his customary drink. Then, turning round his great eye, he discerned the strangers, and growled out to them, demanding who they were, and where from. Ulysses replied most humbly, stating that they were Greeks, from the great expedition that had lately won so much glory in the conquest of Troy; that they were now on their way home, and finished by imploring his hospitality in the name of the gods. Polyphemus deigned no answer, but reaching out his hand seized two of the Greeks, whom he hurled against the side of the cave, and dashed out their brains. He proceeded to devour them with great relish, and having made a hearty meal, stretched himself out on the floor to sleep. Ulysses was tempted to seize the opportunity and plunge his sword into him as he slept, but recollected that it would only expose them all to certain destruction, as the rock with which the giant had closed up the door was far beyond their power to remove, and they would therefore be in hopeless imprisonment. Next morning the giant seized two more of the Greeks, and despatched them in the same manner as their companions, feasting on their flesh till no fragment was left. He then moved away the rock from the door, drove out his flocks, and went out, carefully replacing the barrier after him. When he was gone Ulysses planned how he might take vengeance for his murdered friends, and effect his escape with his surviving companions. He made his men prepare a massive bar of wood cut by the Cyclops for a staff, which they found in the cave. They sharpened the end of it, and seasoned it in the fire, and hid it under the straw on the cavern floor. Then four of the boldest were selected, with whom Ulysses joined himself as a fifth. The Cyclops came home at evening, rolled away the stone and drove in his flock as usual. After milking them and making his arrangements as before, he seized two more of Ulysses' companions and dashed their brains out, and made his evening meal

upon them as he had on the others. After he had supped, Ulysses approaching him handed him a bowl of wine, saying, "Cyclops, this is wine; taste and drink after thy meal of men's flesh." He took and drank it, and was hugely delighted with it, and called for more. Ulysses supplied him once again, which pleased the giant so much that he promised him as a favor that he should be the last of the party devoured. He asked his name, to which Ulysses replied, "My name is Noman."

After his supper the giant lay down to repose, and was soon sound asleep. Then Ulysses with his four select friends thrust the end of the stake into the fire till it was all one burning coal, then poising it exactly above the giant's only eye, they buried it deeply into the socket, twirling it round as a carpenter does his auger. The howling monster with his outcry filled the cavern, and Ulysses with his aids nimbly got out of his way and concealed themselves in the cave. He, bellowing, called aloud on all the Cyclopes dwelling in the caves around him, far and near. They on his cry flocked round the den, and inquired what grievous hurt had caused him to sound such an alarm and break their slumbers. He replied, "O friends, I die, and Noman gives the blow." They answered, "If no man hurts thee it is the stroke of Jove, and thou must bear it." So saying, they left him groaning.

Next morning the Cyclops rolled away the stone to let his flock out to pasture, but planted himself in the door of the cave to feel of all as they went out, that Ulysses and his men should not escape with them. But Ulysses had made his men harness the rams of the flock three abreast, with osiers which they found on the floor of the cave. To the middle ram of the three one of the Greeks suspended himself, so protected by the exterior rams on either side. As they passed, the giant felt of the animals' backs and sides, but never thought of their bellies; so the men all passed safe, Ulysses himself being on the last one that passed. When they had got a few paces from the cavern, Ulysses and his friends released themselves from their rams, and drove a good part of the flock down to the shore to their boat. They

put them aboard with all haste, then pushed off from the shore, and when at a safe distance Ulysses shouted out, "Cyclops, the gods have well requited thee for thy atrocious deeds. Know it is Ulysses to whom thou owest thy shameful loss of sight." The Cyclops, hearing this, seized a rock that projected from the side of the mountain, and rending it from its bed, he lifted it high in the air, then exerting all his force, hurled it in the direction of the voice. Down came the mass, just clearing the vessel's stern. The ocean, at the plunge of the huge rock, heaved the ship towards the land, so that it barely escaped being swamped by the waves. When they had with the utmost difficulty pulled off shore, Ulysses was about to hail the giant again, but his friends besought him not to do so. He could not forbear, however, letting the giant know that they had escaped his missile, but waited till they had reached a safer distance than before. The giant answered them with curses, but Ulysses and his friends plied their oars vigorously, and soon regained their companions.

Ulysses next arrived at the island of Æolus. To this monarch Jupiter had intrusted the government of the winds, to send them forth or retain them at his will. He treated Ulysses hospitably, and at his departure gave him, tied up in a leathern bag, with a silver string, such winds as might be hurtful and dangerous, commanding fair winds to blow the barks towards their country. Nine days they sped before the wind, and all that time Ulysses had stood at the helm, without sleep. At last quite exhausted he lay down to sleep. While he slept, the crew conferred together about the mysterious bag, and concluded it must contain treasures given by the hospitable king Æolus to their commander. Tempted to secure some portion for themselves, they loosed the string, when immediately the winds rushed forth. The ships were driven far from their course, and back again to the island they had just left. Æolus was so indignant at their folly that he refused to assist them further, and they were obliged to labor over their course once more by means of their oars.

THE LÆSTRYONIANS

Their next adventure was with the barbarous tribe of Læstrygonians. The vessels all pushed into the harbor, tempted by the secure appearance of the cove, completely land-locked; only Ulysses moored his vessel without. As soon as the Læstrygonians found the ships completely in their power they attacked them, heaving huge stones which broke and overturned them, and with their spears despatched the seamen as they struggled in the water. All the vessels with their crews were destroyed, except Ulysses' own ship, which had remained outside, and finding no safety but in flight, he exhorted his men to ply their oars vigorously, and they escaped.

With grief for their slain companions mixed with joy at their own escape, they pursued their way till they arrived at the Ææan isle, where Circe dwelt, the daughter of the sun. Landing here, Ulysses climbed a hill, and gazing round saw no signs of habitation except in one spot at the centre of the island, where he perceived a palace embowered with trees. He sent forward one-half of his crew, under the command of Eurylochus, to see what prospect of hospitality they might find. As they approached the palace, they found themselves surrounded by lions, tigers, and wolves, not fierce, but tamed by Circe's art, for she was a powerful magician. All these animals had once been men, but had been changed by Circe's enchantments into the forms of beasts. The sounds of soft music were heard from within, and a sweet female voice singing. Eurylochus called aloud and the goddess came forth and invited them in; they all gladly entered except Eurylochus, who suspected danger. The goddess conducted her guests to a seat, and had them served with wine and other delicacies. When they had feasted heartily, she touched them one by one with her wand, and they became immediately changed into *swine*, in "head, body, voice, and bristles," yet with their intellects as before. She shut them in her sties and supplied them with acorns and such other things as swine love.

Eurylochus hurried back to the ship and told the

tale. Ulysses thereupon determined to go himself, and try if by any means he might deliver his companions. As he strode onward alone, he met a youth who addressed him familiarly, appearing to be acquainted with his adventures. He announced himself as Mercury, and informed Ulysses of the arts of Circe, and of the danger of approaching her. As Ulysses was not to be dissuaded from his attempt, Mercury provided him with a sprig of the plant Moly, of wonderful power to resist sorceries, and instructed him how to act. Ulysses proceeded, and reaching the palace was courteously received by Circe, who entertained him as she had done his companions, and after he had eaten and drank, touched him with her wand, saying, "Hence, seek the sty and wallow with thy friends." But he, instead of obeying, drew his sword and rushed upon her with fury in his countenance. She fell on her knees and begged for mercy. He dictated a solemn oath that she would release his companions and practise no further harm against him or them; and she repeated it, at the same time promising to dismiss them all in safety after hospitably entertaining them. She was as good as her word. The men were restored to their shapes, the rest of the crew summoned from the shore, and the whole magnificently entertained day after day, till Ulysses seemed to have forgotten his native land, and to have reconciled himself to an inglorious life of ease and pleasure.

At length his companions recalled him to nobler sentiments, and he received their admonition gratefully. Circe aided their departure, and instructed them how to pass safely by the coast of the Sirens. The Sirens were sea-nymphs who had the power of charming by their song all who heard them, so that the unhappy mariners were irresistibly impelled to cast themselves into the sea to their destruction. Circe directed Ulysses to fill the ears of his seamen with wax, so that they should not hear the strain; and to cause himself to be bound to the mast, and his people to be strictly enjoined, whatever he might say or do, by no means to release him till they should have passed the Sirens' island. Ulysses obeyed



CIRCE AND THE FRIENDS OF ULYSSES.

From painting by Briton Rivière.

these directions. He filled the ears of his people with wax, and suffered them to bind him with cords firmly to the mast. As they approached the Sirens' island, the sea was calm, and over the waters came the notes of music so ravishing and attractive that Ulysses struggled to get loose, and by cries and signs to his people begged to be released; but they, obedient to his previous orders, sprang forward and bound him still faster. They held on their course, and the music grew fainter till it ceased to be heard, when with joy Ulysses gave his companions the signal to unseal their ears, and they relieved him from his bonds.

The imagination of a modern poet, Keats, has discovered for us the thoughts that passed through the brains of the victims of Circe, after their transformation. In his "Endymion" he represents one of them, a monarch in the guise of an elephant, addressing the sorceress in human language, thus :

"I sue not for my happy crown again;
I sue not for my phalanx on the plain;
I sue not for my lone, my widowed wife;
I sue not for my ruddy drops of life,
My children fair, my lovely girls and boys;
I will forget them; I will pass these joys,
Ask nought so heavenward; so too—too high;
Only I pray, as fairest boon, to die;
To be delivered from this cumbrous flesh,
From this gross, detestable, filthy mesh,
And merely given to the cold, bleak air.
Have mercy, goddess! Circe, feel my prayer!"

SCYLLA AND CHARYBDIS

Ulysses had been warned by Circe of the two monsters Scylla and Charybdis. We have already met with Scylla in the story of Glaucus, and remember that she was once a beautiful maiden and was changed into a snaky monster by Circe. She dwelt in a cave high up on the cliff, from whence she was accustomed to thrust forth her long necks (for she had six heads), and in each of her mouths to seize one of the crew of every vessel passing within reach. The other terror, Charyb-

dis, was a gulf, nearly on a level with the water. Thrice each day the water rushed into a frightful chasm, and thrice was disgorged. Any vessel coming near the whirlpool when the tide was rushing in must inevitably be ingulfed; not Neptune himself could save it.

On approaching the haunt of the dread monsters, Ulysses kept strict watch to discover them. The roar of the waters as Charybdis ingulfed them, gave warning at a distance, but Scylla could nowhere be discerned. While Ulysses and his men watched with anxious eyes the dreadful whirlpool, they were not equally on their guard from the attack of Scylla, and the monster, darting forth her snaky heads, caught six of his men, and bore them away, shrieking, to her den. It was the saddest sight Ulysses had yet seen; to behold his friends thus sacrificed and hear their cries, unable to afford them any assistance.

Circe had warned him of another danger. After passing Scylla and Charybdis the next land he would make was Thrinakia, an island whereon were pastured the cattle of Hyperion, the Sun, tended by his daughters Lampetia and Phaëthusa. These flocks must not be violated, whatever the wants of the voyagers might be. If this injunction were transgressed destruction was sure to fall on the offenders.

Ulysses would willingly have passed the island of the Sun without stopping, but his companions so urgently pleaded for the rest and refreshment that would be derived from anchoring and passing the night on shore, that Ulysses yielded. He bound them, however, with an oath that they would not touch one of the animals of the sacred flocks and herds, but content themselves with what provision they yet had left of the supply which Circe had put on board. So long as this supply lasted the people kept their oath, but contrary winds detained them at the island for a month, and after consuming all their stock of provisions, they were forced to rely upon the birds and fishes they could catch. Famine pressed them, and at length one day, in the absence of Ulysses, they slew some of the cattle, vainly attempting to make amends for the deed by offering

from them a portion to the offended powers. Ulysses, on his return to the shore, was horror-struck at perceiving what they had done, and the more so on account of the portentous signs which followed. The skins crept on the ground, and the joints of meat lowed on the spits while roasting.

The wind becoming fair they sailed from the island. They had not gone far when the weather changed, and a storm of thunder and lightning ensued. A stroke of lightning shattered their mast, which in its fall killed the pilot. At last the vessel itself came to pieces. The keel and mast floating side by side, Ulysses formed of them a raft, to which he clung, and, the wind changing, the waves bore him to Calypso's island. All the rest of the crew perished.

The following allusion to the topics we have just been considering is from Milton's "Comus," line 252:

"... I have often heard
My mother Circe and the Sirens three,
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
Culling their potent herbs and baneful drugs,
Who as they sung would take the prisoned soul
And lap it in Elysium. Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmured soft applause."

Scylla and Charybdis have become proverbial, to denote opposite dangers which beset one's course. See Proverbial Expressions.

CALYPSO

Calypso was a sea-nymph, which name denotes a numerous class of female divinities of lower rank, yet sharing many of the attributes of the gods. Calypso received Ulysses hospitably, entertained him magnificently, became enamoured of him, and wished to retain him forever, conferring on him immortality. But he persisted in his resolution to return to his country and his wife and son. Calypso at last received the command of Jove to dismiss him. Mercury brought the

message to her, and found her in her grotto, which is thus described by Homer :

“A garden vine, luxuriant on all sides,
Mantled the spacious cavern, cluster-hung
Profuse; four fountains of serenest lymph,
Their sinuous course pursuing side by side,
Strayed all around, and everywhere appeared
Meadows of softest verdure, purpled o'er
With violets; it was a scene to fill
A god from heaven with wonder and delight.”

Calypso with much reluctance proceeded to obey the commands of Jupiter. She supplied Ulysses with the means of constructing a raft, provisioned it well for him, and gave him a favoring gale. He sped on his course prosperously for many days, till at length, when in sight of land, a storm arose that broke his mast, and threatened to rend the raft asunder. In this crisis he was seen by a compassionate sea-nymph, who in the form of a cormorant alighted on the raft, and presented him a girdle, directing him to bind it beneath his breast, and if he should be compelled to trust himself to the waves, it would buoy him up and enable him by swimming to reach the land.

Fenelon, in his romance of “Telemachus,” has given us the adventures of the son of Ulysses in search of his father. Among other places at which he arrived, following on his father's footsteps, was Calypso's isle, and, as in the former case, the goddess tried every art to keep him with her, and offered to share her immortality with him. But Minerva, who in the shape of Mentor accompanied him and governed all his movements, made him repel her allurements, and when no other means of escape could be found, the two friends leaped from a cliff into the sea, and swam to a vessel which lay becalmed off shore. Byron alludes to this leap of Telemachus and Mentor in the following stanza :

“But not in silence pass Calypso's isles,
The sister tenants of the middle deep;
There for the weary still a haven smiles,
Though the fair goddess long has ceased to weep,

And o'er her cliffs a fruitless watch to keep
For him who dared prefer a mortal bride.
Here too his boy essayed the dreadful leap,
Stern Mentor urged from high to yonder tide;
While thus of both bereft the nymph-queen doubly sighed."

CHAPTER XXX

THE PHÆACIANS—FATE OF THE SUITORS

THE PHÆACIANS

ULYSSES clung to the raft while any of its timbers kept together, and when it no longer yielded him support, binding the girdle around him, he swam. Minerva smoothed the billows before him and sent him a wind that rolled the waves towards the shore. The surf beat high on the rocks and seemed to forbid approach; but at length finding calm water at the mouth of a gentle stream, he landed, spent with toil, breathless and speechless and almost dead. After some time, reviving, he kissed the soil, rejoicing, yet at a loss what course to take. At a short distance he perceived a wood, to which he turned his steps. There, finding a covert sheltered by intermingling branches alike from the sun and the rain, he collected a pile of leaves and formed a bed, on which he stretched himself, and heaping the leaves over him, fell asleep.

The land where he was thrown was Scheria, the country of the Phæacians. These people dwelt originally near the Cyclopes; but being oppressed by that savage race, they migrated to the isle of Scheria, under the conduct of Nausithoüs, their king. They were, the poet tells us, a people akin to the gods, who appeared manifestly and feasted among them when they offered sacrifices, and did not conceal themselves from solitary wayfarers when they met them. They had abundance of wealth and lived in the enjoyment of it undisturbed by the alarms of war, for as they dwelt remote from gain-seeking man, no enemy ever approached their

shores, and they did not even require to make use of bows and quivers. Their chief employment was navigation. Their ships, which went with the velocity of birds, were endued with intelligence; they knew every port and needed no pilot. Alcinoüs, the son of Nausithoüs, was now their king, a wise and just sovereign, beloved by his people.

Now it happened that the very night on which Ulysses was cast ashore on the Phæacian island, and while he lay sleeping on his bed of leaves, Nausicaa, the daughter of the king, had a dream sent by Minerva, reminding her that her wedding-day was not far distant, and that it would be but a prudent preparation for that event to have a general washing of the clothes of the family. This was no slight affair, for the fountains were at some distance, and the garments must be carried thither. On awaking, the princess hastened to her parents to tell them what was on her mind; not alluding to her wedding-day, but finding other reasons equally good. Her father readily assented and ordered the grooms to furnish forth a wagon for the purpose. The clothes were put therein, and the queen mother placed in the wagon, likewise, an abundant supply of food and wine. The princess took her seat and plied the lash, her attendant virgins following her on foot. Arrived at the river side, they turned out the mules to graze, and unlading the carriage, bore the garments down to the water, and working with cheerfulness and alacrity soon despatched their labor. Then having spread the garments on the shore to dry, and having themselves bathed, they sat down to enjoy their meal; after which they rose and amused themselves with a game of ball, the princess singing to them while they played. But when they had refolded the apparel and were about to resume their way to the town, Minerva caused the ball thrown by the princess to fall into the water, whereat they all screamed and Ulysses awaked at the sound.

Now we must picture to ourselves Ulysses, a shipwrecked mariner, but a few hours escaped from the waves, and utterly destitute of clothing, awaking and discovering that only a few bushes were interposed be-

tween him and a group of young maidens whom, by their deportment and attire, he discovered to be not mere peasant girls, but of a higher class. Sadly needing help, how could he yet venture, naked as he was, to discover himself and make his wants known? It certainly was a case worthy of the interposition of his patron goddess Minerva, who never failed him at a crisis. Breaking off a leafy branch from a tree, he held it before him and stepped out from the thicket. The virgins at sight of him fled in all directions, Nausicaa alone excepted, for *her* Minerva aided and endowed with courage and discernment. Ulysses, standing respectfully aloof, told his sad case, and besought the fair object (whether queen or goddess he professed he knew not) for food and clothing. The princess replied courteously, promising present relief and her father's hospitality when he should become acquainted with the facts. She called back her scattered maidens, chiding their alarm, and reminding them that the Phæacians had no enemies to fear. This man, she told them, was an unhappy wanderer, whom it was a duty to cherish, for the poor and stranger are from Jove. She bade them bring food and clothing, for some of her brother's garments were among the contents of the wagon. When this was done, and Ulysses, retiring to a sheltered place, had washed his body free from the sea-foam, clothed and refreshed himself with food, Pallas dilated his form and diffused grace over his ample chest and manly brows.

The princess, seeing him, was filled with admiration, and scrupled not to say to her damsels that she wished the gods would send her such a husband. To Ulysses she recommended that he should repair to the city, following herself and train so far as the way lay through the fields; but when they should approach the city she desired that he would no longer be seen in her company, for she feared the remarks which rude and vulgar people might make on seeing her return accompanied by such a gallant stranger. To avoid which she directed him to stop at a grove adjoining the city, in which were a farm and garden belonging to the king. After al-

lowing time for the princess and her companions to reach the city, he was then to pursue his way thither, and would be easily guided by any he might meet to the royal abode.

Ulysses obeyed the directions and in due time proceeded to the city, on approaching which he met a young woman bearing a pitcher forth for water. It was Minerva, who had assumed that form. Ulysses accosted her and desired to be directed to the palace of Alcinoüs the king. The maiden replied respectfully, offering to be his guide; for the palace, she informed him, stood near her father's dwelling. Under the guidance of the goddess, and by her power enveloped in a cloud which shielded him from observation, Ulysses passed among the busy crowd, and with wonder observed their harbor, their ships, their forum (the resort of heroes), and their battlements, till they came to the palace, where the goddess, having first given him some information of the country, king, and people he was about to meet, left him. Ulysses, before entering the courtyard of the palace, stood and surveyed the scene. Its splendor astonished him. Brazen walls stretched from the entrance to the interior house, of which the doors were gold, the doorposts silver, the lintels silver ornamented with gold. On either side were figures of mastiffs wrought in gold and silver, standing in rows as if to guard the approach. Along the walls were seats spread through all their length with mantles of finest texture, the work of Phæacian maidens. On these seats the princes sat and feasted, while golden statues of graceful youths held in their hands lighted torches which shed radiance over the scene. Full fifty female menials served in household offices, some employed to grind the corn, others to wind off the purple wool or ply the loom. For the Phæacian women as far exceeded all other women in household arts as the mariners of that country did the rest of mankind in the management of ships. Without the court a spacious garden lay, four acres in extent. In it grew many a lofty tree, pomegranate, pear, apple, fig, and olive. Neither winter's cold nor summer's drought arrested their growth, but they flour-

ished in constant succession, some budding while others were maturing. The vineyard was equally prolific. In one quarter you might see the vines, some in blossom, some loaded with ripe grapes, and in another observe the vintagers treading the wine press. On the garden's borders flowers of all hues bloomed all the year round, arranged with neatest art. In the midst two fountains poured forth their waters, one flowing by artificial channels over all the garden, the other conducted through the courtyard of the palace, whence every citizen might draw his supplies.

Ulysses stood gazing in admiration, unobserved himself, for the cloud which Minerva spread around him still shielded him. At length, having sufficiently observed the scene, he advanced with rapid step into the hall where the chiefs and senators were assembled, pouring libation to Mercury, whose worship followed the evening meal. Just then Minerva dissolved the cloud and disclosed him to the assembled chiefs. Advancing to the place where the queen sat, he knelt at her feet and implored her favor and assistance to enable him to return to his native country. Then withdrawing, he seated himself in the manner of suppliants, at the hearth side.

For a time none spoke. At last an aged statesman, addressing the king, said, "It is not fit that a stranger who asks our hospitality should be kept waiting in suppliant guise, none welcoming him. Let him therefore be led to a seat among us and supplied with food and wine." At these words the king rising gave his hand to Ulysses and led him to a seat, displacing thence his own son to make room for the stranger. Food and wine were set before him and he ate and refreshed himself.

The king then dismissed his guests, notifying them that the next day he would call them to council to consider what had best be done for the stranger.

When the guests had departed and Ulysses was left alone with the king and queen, the queen asked him who he was and whence he came, and (recognizing the clothes which he wore as those which her maidens and

herself had made) from whom he received those garments. He told them of his residence in Calypso's isle and his departure thence; of the wreck of his raft, his escape by swimming, and of the relief afforded by the princess. The parents heard approvingly, and the king promised to furnish a ship in which his guest might return to his own land.

The next day the assembled chiefs confirmed the promise of the king. A bark was prepared and a crew of stout rowers selected, and all betook themselves to the palace, where a bounteous repast was provided. After the feast the king proposed that the young men should show their guest their proficiency in manly sports, and all went forth to the arena for games of running, wrestling, and other exercises. After all had done their best, Ulysses being challenged to show what he could do, at first declined, but being taunted by one of the youths, seized a quoit of weight far heavier than any of the Phæacians had thrown, and sent it farther than the utmost throw of theirs. All were astonished, and viewed their guest with greatly increased respect.

After the games they returned to the hall, and the herald led in Demodocus, the blind bard,—

“ . . . Dear to the Muse,
Who yet appointed him both good and ill,
Took from him sight, but gave him strains divine.”

He took for his theme the “Wooden Horse,” by means of which the Greeks found entrance into Troy. Apollo inspired him, and he sang so feelingly the terrors and the exploits of that eventful time that all were delighted, but Ulysses was moved to tears. Observing which, Alcinoüs, when the song was done, demanded of him why at the mention of Troy his sorrows awaked. Had he lost there a father, or brother, or any dear friend? Ulysses replied by announcing himself by his true name, and at their request, recounted the adventures which had befallen him since his departure from Troy. This narrative raised the sympathy and admiration of the Phæacians for their guest to the highest pitch. The king proposed that all the chiefs should

present him with a gift, himself setting the example. They obeyed, and vied with one another in loading the illustrious stranger with costly gifts.

The next day Ulysses set sail in the Phæacian vessel, and in a short time arrived safe at Ithaca, his own island. When the vessel touched the strand he was asleep. The mariners, without waking him, carried him on shore, and landed with him the chest containing his presents, and then sailed away.

Neptune was so displeased at the conduct of the Phæacians in thus rescuing Ulysses from his hands that on the return of the vessel to port he transformed it into a rock, right opposite the mouth of the harbor.

Homer's description of the ships of the Phæacians has been thought to look like an anticipation of the wonders of modern steam navigation. Alcinoüs says to Ulysses:

"Say from what city, from what regions tossed,
And what inhabitants those regions boast?
So shalt thou quickly reach the realm assigned,
In wondrous ships, self-moved, instinct with mind;
No helm secures their course, no pilot guides;
Like man intelligent they plough the tides,
Conscious of every coast and every bay
That lies beneath the sun's all-seeing ray."

—*Odyssey*, Book VIII.

Lord Carlisle, in his "Diary in the Turkish and Greek Waters," thus speaks of Corfu, which he considers to be the ancient Phæacian island:

"The sites explain the 'Odyssey.' The temple of the sea-god could not have been more fitly placed, upon a grassy platform of the most elastic turf, on the brow of a crag commanding harbor, and channel, and ocean. Just at the entrance of the inner harbor there is a picturesque rock with a small convent perched upon it, which by one legend is the transformed pinnacle of Ulysses.

"Almost the only river in the island is just at the proper distance from the probable site of the city and palace of the king, to justify the princess Nausicaa

having had resort to her chariot and to luncheon when she went with the maidens of the court to wash their garments."

FATE OF THE SUITORS

Ulysses had now been away from Ithaca for twenty years, and when he awoke he did not recognize his native land. Minerva appeared to him in the form of a young shepherd, informed him where he was, and told him the state of things at his palace. More than a hundred nobles of Ithaca and of the neighboring islands had been for years suing for the hand of Penelope, his wife, imagining him dead, and lording it over his palace and people, as if they were owners of both. That he might be able to take vengeance upon them, it was important that he should not be recognized. Minerva accordingly metamorphosed him into an unsightly beggar, and as such he was kindly received by Eumæus, the swine-herd, a faithful servant of his house.

Telemachus, his son, was absent in quest of his father. He had gone to the courts of the other kings, who had returned from the Trojan expedition. While on the search, he received counsel from Minerva to return home. He arrived and sought Eumæus to learn something of the state of affairs at the palace before presenting himself among the suitors. Finding a stranger with Eumæus, he treated him courteously, though in the garb of a beggar, and promised him assistance. Eumæus was sent to the palace to inform Penelope privately of her son's arrival, for caution was necessary with regard to the suitors, who, as Telemachus had learned, were plotting to intercept and kill him. When Eumæus was gone, Minerva presented herself to Ulysses, and directed him to make himself known to his son. At the same time she touched him, removed at once from him the appearance of age and penury, and gave him the aspect of vigorous manhood that belonged to him. Telemachus viewed him with astonishment, and at first thought he must be more than mortal. But Ulysses announced himself as his father, and accounted for the change of appearance by explaining that it was Minerva's doing.

“ . . . Then threw Telemachus
His arms around his father's neck and wept.
Desire intense of lamentation seized
On both; soft murmurs uttering, each indulged
His grief.”

The father and son took counsel together how they should get the better of the suitors and punish them for their outrages. It was arranged that Telemachus should proceed to the palace and mingle with the suitors as formerly; that Ulysses should also go as a beggar, a character which in the rude old times had different privileges from what we concede to it now. As traveller and storyteller, the beggar was admitted in the halls of chieftains, and often treated like a guest; though sometimes, also, no doubt, with contumely. Ulysses charged his son not to betray, by any display of unusual interest in him, that he knew him to be other than he seemed, and even if he saw him insulted, or beaten, not to interpose otherwise than he might do for any stranger. At the palace they found the usual scene of feasting and riot going on. The suitors pretended to receive Telemachus with joy at his return, though secretly mortified at the failure of their plots to take his life. The old beggar was permitted to enter, and provided with a portion from the table. A touching incident occurred as Ulysses entered the courtyard of the palace. An old dog lay in the yard almost dead with age, and seeing a stranger enter, raised his head, with ears erect. It was Argus, Ulysses' own dog, that he had in other days often led to the chase.

“ . . . Soon as he perceived
Long-lost Ulysses nigh, down fell his ears
Clapped close, and with his tail glad sign he gave
Of gratulation, impotent to rise,
And to approach his master as of old.
Ulysses, noting him, wiped off a tear
Unmarked.
. . . Then his destiny released
Old Argus, soon as he had lived to see
Ulysses in the twentieth year restored.”

As Ulysses sat eating his portion in the hall, the

suitors began to exhibit their insolence to him. When he mildly remonstrated, one of them raised a stool and with it gave him a blow. Telemachus had hard work to restrain his indignation at seeing his father so treated in his own hall, but remembering his father's injunctions, said no more than what became him as master of the house, though young, and protector of his guests.

Penelope had protracted her decision in favor of either of her suitors so long that there seemed to be no further pretence for delay. The continued absence of her husband seemed to prove that his return was no longer to be expected. Meanwhile her son had grown up, and was able to manage his own affairs. She therefore consented to submit the question of her choice to a trial of skill among the suitors. The test selected was shooting with the bow. Twelve rings were arranged in a line, and he whose arrow was sent through the whole twelve was to have the queen for his prize. A bow that one of his brother heroes had given to Ulysses in former times was brought from the armory, and with its quiver full of arrows was laid in the hall. Telemachus had taken care that all other weapons should be removed, under pretence that in the heat of competition there was danger, in some rash moment, of putting them to an improper use.

All things being prepared for the trial, the first thing to be done was to bend the bow in order to attach the string. Telemachus endeavored to do it, but found all his efforts fruitless; and modestly confessing that he had attempted a task beyond his strength, he yielded the bow to another. *He* tried it with no better success, and, amidst the laughter and jeers of his companions, gave it up. Another tried it and another; they rubbed the bow with tallow, but all to no purpose; it would not bend. Then spoke Ulysses, humbly suggesting that he should be permitted to try; for, said he, "beggar as I am, I was once a soldier, and there is still some strength in these old limbs of mine." The suitors hooted with derision, and commanded to turn him out of the hall for his insolence. But Telemachus spoke up for him, and, merely to gratify the old man, bade him try. Ulysses

took the bow, and handled it with the hand of a master. With ease he adjusted the cord to its notch, then fitting an arrow to the bow he drew the string and sped the arrow unerring through the rings.

Without allowing them time to express their astonishment, he said, "Now for another mark!" and aimed direct at the most insolent one of the suitors. The arrow pierced through his throat and he fell dead. Telemachus, Eumæus, and another faithful follower, well armed, now sprang to the side of Ulysses. The suitors, in amazement, looked round for arms, but found none, neither was there any way of escape, for Eumæus had secured the door. Ulysses left them not long in uncertainty; he announced himself as the long-lost chief, whose house they had invaded, whose substance they had squandered, whose wife and son they had persecuted for ten long years; and told them he meant to have ample vengeance. All were slain, and Ulysses was left master of his palace and possessor of his kingdom and his wife.

Tennyson's poem of "Ulysses" represents the old hero, after his dangers past and nothing left but to stay at home and be happy, growing tired of inaction and resolving to set forth again in quest of new adventures:

"... Come, my friends,
'Tis not too late to seek a newer world.
Push off, and sitting well in order smite
The sounding furrows; for my purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset, and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down;
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles whom we knew;" etc.

CHAPTER XXXI

ADVENTURES OF ÆNEAS—THE HARPIES—DIDO—
PALINURUS

ADVENTURES OF ÆNEAS

WE have followed one of the Grecian heroes, Ulysses, in his wanderings on his return home from Troy, and now we propose to share the fortunes of the remnant of the *conquered* people, under their chief Æneas, in their search for a new home, after the ruin of their native city. On that fatal night when the wooden horse disgorged its contents of armed men, and the capture and conflagration of the city were the result, Æneas made his escape from the scene of destruction, with his father, and his wife, and young son. The father, Anchises, was too old to walk with the speed required, and Æneas took him upon his shoulders. Thus burdened, leading his son and followed by his wife, he made the best of his way out of the burning city; but, in the confusion, his wife was swept away and lost.

On arriving at the place of rendezvous, numerous fugitives, of both sexes, were found, who put themselves under the guidance of Æneas. Some months were spent in preparation, and at length they embarked. They first landed on the neighboring shores of Thrace, and were preparing to build a city, but Æneas was deterred by a prodigy. Preparing to offer sacrifice, he tore some twigs from one of the bushes. To his dismay the wounded part dropped blood. When he repeated the act a voice from the ground cried out to him, "Spare me, Æneas; I am your kinsman, Polydore, here murdered with many arrows, from which a bush has grown, nourished with my blood." These words recalled to the recollection of Æneas that Polydore was a young prince of Troy, whom his father had sent with ample treasures to the neighboring land of Thrace, to be there brought up, at a distance from the horrors of war. The king to whom he was sent had murdered

him and seized his treasures. Æneas and his companions, considering the land accursed by the stain of such a crime, hastened away.

They next landed on the island of Delos, which was once a floating island, till Jupiter fastened it by adamantine chains to the bottom of the sea. Apollo and Diana were born there, and the island was sacred to Apollo. Here Æneas consulted the oracle of Apollo, and received an answer, ambiguous as usual,—“Seek your ancient mother; there the race of Æneas shall dwell, and reduce all other nations to their sway.” The Trojans heard with joy and immediately began to ask one another, “Where is the spot intended by the oracle?” Anchises remembered that there was a tradition that their forefathers came from Crete and thither they resolved to steer. They arrived at Crete and began to build their city, but sickness broke out among them, and the fields that they had planted failed to yield a crop. In this gloomy aspect of affairs Æneas was warned in a dream to leave the country and seek a western land, called Hesperia, whence Dardanus, the true founder of the Trojan race, had originally migrated. To Hesperia, now called Italy, therefore, they directed their future course, and not till after many adventures and the lapse of time sufficient to carry a modern navigator several times round the world, did they arrive there.

Their first landing was at the island of the Harpies. These were disgusting birds with the heads of maidens, with long claws and faces pale with hunger. They were sent by the gods to torment a certain Phineus, whom Jupiter had deprived of his sight, in punishment of his cruelty; and whenever a meal was placed before him the Harpies darted down from the air and carried it off. They were driven away from Phineus by the heroes of the Argonautic expedition, and took refuge in the island where Æneas now found them.

When they entered the port the Trojans saw herds of cattle roaming over the plain. They slew as many as they wished and prepared for a feast. But no sooner had they seated themselves at the table than a horrible

clamor was heard in the air, and a flock of these odious harpies came rushing down upon them, seizing in their talons the meat from the dishes and flying away with it. Æneas and his companions drew their swords and dealt vigorous blows among the monsters, but to no purpose, for they were so nimble it was almost impossible to hit them, and their feathers were like armor impenetrable to steel. One of them, perched on a neighboring cliff, screamed out, "Is it thus, Trojans, you treat us innocent birds, first slaughter our cattle and then make war on ourselves?" She then predicted dire sufferings to them in their future course, and having vented her wrath flew away. The Trojans made haste to leave the country, and next found themselves coasting along the shore of Epirus. Here they landed, and to their astonishment learned that certain Trojan exiles, who had been carried there as prisoners, had become rulers of the country. Andromache, the widow of Hector, became the wife of one of the victorious Grecian chiefs, to whom she bore a son. Her husband dying, she was left regent of the country, as guardian of her son, and had married a fellow-captive, Helenus, of the royal race of Troy. Helenus and Andromache treated the exiles with the utmost hospitality, and dismissed them loaded with gifts.

From hence Æneas coasted along the shore of Sicily and passed the country of the Cyclopes. Here they were hailed from the shore by a miserable object, whom by his garments, tattered as they were, they perceived to be a Greek. He told them he was one of Ulysses's companions, left behind by that chief in his hurried departure. He related the story of Ulysses's adventure with Polyphemus, and besought them to take him off with them as he had no means of sustaining his existence where he was but wild berries and roots, and lived in constant fear of the Cyclopes. While he spoke Polyphemus made his appearance; a terrible monster, shapeless, vast, whose only eye had been put out.¹ He walked with cautious steps, feeling his way with a staff, down to the sea-side, to wash his eye-socket in the

¹ See Proverbial Expressions.

waves. When he reached the water, he waded out towards them, and his immense height enabled him to advance far into the sea, so that the Trojans, in terror, took to their oars to get out of his way. Hearing the oars, Polyphemus shouted after them, so that the shores resounded, and at the noise the other Cyclopes came forth from their caves and woods and lined the shore, like a row of lofty pine trees. The Trojans plied their oars and soon left them out of sight.

Æneas had been cautioned by Helenus to avoid the strait guarded by the monsters Scylla and Charybdis. There Ulysses, the reader will remember, had lost six of his men, seized by Scylla while the navigators were wholly intent upon avoiding Charybdis. Æneas, following the advice of Helenus, shunned the dangerous pass and coasted along the island of Sicily.

Juno, seeing the Trojans speeding their way prosperously towards their destined shore, felt her old grudge against them revive, for she could not forget the slight that Paris had put upon her, in awarding the prize of beauty to another. In heavenly minds can such resentments dwell!¹ Accordingly she hastened to Æolus, the ruler of the winds,—the same who supplied Ulysses with favoring gales, giving him the contrary ones tied up in a bag. Æolus obeyed the goddess and sent forth his sons, Boreas, Typhon, and the other winds, to toss the ocean. A terrible storm ensued and the Trojan ships were driven out of their course towards the coast of Africa. They were in imminent danger of being wrecked, and were separated, so that Æneas thought that all were lost except his own.

At this crisis, Neptune, hearing the storm raging, and knowing that he had given no orders for one, raised his head above the waves, and saw the fleet of Æneas driving before the gale. Knowing the hostility of Juno, he was at no loss to account for it, but his anger was not the less at this interference in his province. He called the winds and dismissed them with a severe reprimand. He then soothed the waves, and brushed away the clouds from before the face of the sun. Some of the ships

¹ See Proverbial Expressions.

which had got on the rocks he pried off with his own trident, while Triton and a sea-nymph, putting their shoulders under others, set them afloat again. The Trojans, when the sea became calm, sought the nearest shore, which was the coast of Carthage, where Æneas was so happy as to find that one by one the ships all arrived safe, though badly shaken.

Waller, in his "Panegyric to the Lord Protector" (Cromwell), alludes to this stilling of the storm by Neptune:

"Above the waves, as Neptune showed his face,
To chide the winds and save the Trojan race,
So has your Highness, raised above the rest,
Storms of ambition tossing us repressed."

DIDO

Carthage, where the exiles had now arrived, was a spot on the coast of Africa opposite Sicily, where at that time a Tyrian colony under Dido, their queen, were laying the foundations of a state destined in later ages to be the rival of Rome itself. Dido was the daughter of Belus, king of Tyre, and sister of Pygmalion, who succeeded his father on the throne. Her husband was Sichæus, a man of immense wealth, but Pygmalion, who coveted his treasures, caused him to be put to death. Dido, with a numerous body of friends and followers, both men and women, succeeded in effecting their escape from Tyre, in several vessels, carrying with them the treasures of Sichæus. On arriving at the spot which they selected as the seat of their future home, they asked of the natives only so much land as they could enclose with a bull's hide. When this was readily granted, she caused the hide to be cut into strips, and with them enclosed a spot on which she built a citadel, and called it Byrsa (a hide). Around this fort the city of Carthage rose, and soon became a powerful and flourishing place.

Such was the state of affairs when Æneas with his Trojans arrived there. Dido received the illustrious exiles with friendliness and hospitality. "Not unac-



ANEAS AT THE COURT OF QUEEN DIDO.

From painting by P. Guerin, Salon of 1817.

quainted with distress," she said, "I have learned to succor the unfortunate."¹ The queen's hospitality displayed itself in festivities at which games of strength and skill were exhibited. The strangers contended for the palm with her own subjects, on equal terms, the queen declaring that whether the victor were "Trojan or Tyrian should make no difference to her."¹ At the feast which followed the games, Æneas gave at her request a recital of the closing events of the Trojan history and his own adventures after the fall of the city. Dido was charmed with his discourse and filled with admiration of his exploits. She conceived an ardent passion for him, and he for his part seemed well content to accept the fortunate chance which appeared to offer him at once a happy termination of his wanderings, a home, a kingdom, and a bride. Months rolled away in the enjoyment of pleasant intercourse, and it seemed as if Italy and the empire destined to be founded on its shores were alike forgotten. Seeing which, Jupiter despatched Mercury with a message to Æneas recalling him to a sense of his high destiny, and commanding him to resume his voyage.

Æneas parted from Dido, though she tried every allurements and persuasion to detain him. The blow to her affection and her pride was too much for her to endure, and when she found that he was gone, she mounted a funeral pile which she had caused to be erected, and having stabbed herself was consumed with the pile. The flames rising over the city were seen by the departing Trojans, and, though the cause was unknown, gave to Æneas some intimation of the fatal event.

The following epigram we find in "Elegant Extracts":

FROM THE LATIN

"Unhappy, Dido, was thy fate
In first and second married state!
One husband caused thy flight by dying,
Thy death the other caused by flying."

¹ See Proverbial Expressions.

PALINURUS

After touching at the island of Sicily, where Acestes, a prince of Trojan lineage, bore sway, who gave them a hospitable reception, the Trojans reëmbarked, and held on their course for Italy. Venus now interceded with Neptune to allow her son at last to attain the wished-for goal and find an end of his perils on the deep. Neptune consented, stipulating only for one life as a ransom for the rest. The victim was Palinurus, the pilot. As he sat watching the stars, with his hand on the helm, Somnus sent by Neptune approached in the guise of Phorbas and said: "Palinurus, the breeze is fair, the water smooth, and the ship sails steadily on her course. Lie down awhile and take needful rest. I will stand at the helm in your place." Palinurus replied, "Tell me not of smooth seas or favoring winds, —me who have seen so much of their treachery. Shall I trust Æneas to the chances of the weather and the winds?" And he continued to grasp the helm and to keep his eyes fixed on the stars. But Somnus waved over him a branch moistened with Lethæan dew, and his eyes closed in spite of all his efforts. Then Somnus pushed him overboard and he fell; but keeping his hold upon the helm, it came away with him. Neptune was mindful of his promise and kept the ship on her track without helm or pilot, till Æneas discovered his loss, and, sorrowing deeply for his faithful steersman, took charge of the ship himself.

There is a beautiful allusion to the story of Palinurus in Scott's "Marmion," Introduction to Canto I., where the poet, speaking of the recent death of William Pitt, says:

"O, think how, to his latest day,
When death just hovering claimed his prey,
With Palinure's unaltered mood,
Firm at his dangerous post he stood;
Each call for needful rest repelled,
With dying hand the rudder held,
Till in his fall, with fateful sway,
The steerage of the realm gave way."

The ships at last reached the shores of Italy, and joyfully did the adventurers leap to land. While his people were employed in making their encampment Æneas sought the abode of the Sibyl. It was a cave connected with a temple and grove, sacred to Apollo and Diana. While Æneas contemplated the scene, the Sibyl accosted him. She seemed to know his errand, and under the influence of the deity of the place, burst forth in a prophetic strain, giving dark intimations of labors and perils through which he was destined to make his way to final success. She closed with the encouraging words which have become proverbial: "Yield not to disasters, but press onward the more bravely."¹ Æneas replied that he had prepared himself for whatever might await him. He had but one request to make. Having been directed in a dream to seek the abode of the dead in order to confer with his father, Anchises, to receive from him a revelation of his future fortunes and those of his race, he asked her assistance to enable him to accomplish the task. The Sibyl replied, "The descent to Avernus is easy: the gate of Pluto stands open night and day; but to retrace one's steps and return to the upper air, that is the toil, that the difficulty."¹ She instructed him to seek in the forest a tree on which grew a golden branch. This branch was to be plucked off and borne as a gift to Proserpine, and if fate was propitious it would yield to the hand and quit its parent trunk, but otherwise no force could rend it away. If torn away, another would succeed.¹

Æneas followed the directions of the Sibyl. His mother, Venus, sent two of her doves to fly before him and show him the way, and by their assistance he found the tree, plucked the branch, and hastened back with it to the Sibyl.

¹ See Proverbial Expressions.

CHAPTER XXXII

THE INFERNAL REGIONS—THE SIBYL

THE INFERNAL REGIONS

As at the commencement of our series we have given the pagan account of the creation of the world, so as we approach its conclusion we present a view of the regions of the dead, depicted by one of their most enlightened poets, who drew his doctrines from their most esteemed philosophers. The region where Virgil locates the entrance to this abode is perhaps the most strikingly adapted to excite ideas of the terrific and preternatural of any on the face of the earth. It is the volcanic region near Vesuvius, where the whole country is cleft with chasms, from which sulphurous flames arise, while the ground is shaken with pent-up vapors, and mysterious sounds issue from the bowels of the earth. The lake Avernus is supposed to fill the crater of an extinct volcano. It is circular, half a mile wide, and very deep, surrounded by high banks, which in Virgil's time were covered with a gloomy forest. Mephitic vapors rise from its waters, so that no life is found on its banks, and no birds fly over it. Here, according to the poet, was the cave which afforded access to the infernal regions, and here Æneas offered sacrifices to the infernal deities, Proserpine, Hecate, and the Furies. Then a roaring was heard in the earth, the woods on the hill-tops were shaken, and the howling of dogs announced the approach of the deities. "Now," said the Sibyl, "summon up your courage, for you will need it." She descended into the cave, and Æneas followed. Before the threshold of hell they passed through a group of beings who are enumerated as Griefs and avenging Cares, pale Diseases and melancholy Age, Fear and Hunger that tempt to crime, Toil, Poverty, and Death,—forms horrible to view. The Furies spread their couches there, and Discord, whose hair was of vipers tied up with a bloody fillet. Here also were the monsters,

Briareus, with his hundred arms, Hydras hissing, and Chimæras breathing fire. Æneas shuddered at the sight, drew his sword and would have struck, but the Sibyl restrained him. They then came to the black river Cocytus, where they found the ferryman, Charon, old and squalid, but strong and vigorous, who was receiving passengers of all kinds into his boat, magnanimous heroes, boys and unmarried girls, as numerous as the leaves that fall at autumn, or the flocks that fly southward at the approach of winter. They stood pressing for a passage and longing to touch the opposite shore. But the stern ferryman took in only such as he chose, driving the rest back. Æneas, wondering at the sight, asked the Sibyl, "Why this discrimination?" She answered, "Those who are taken on board the bark are the souls of those who have received due burial rites; the host of others who have remained unburied are not permitted to pass the flood, but wander a hundred years, and flit to and fro about the shore, till at last they are taken over." Æneas grieved at recollecting some of his own companions who had perished in the storm. At that moment he beheld Palinurus, his pilot, who fell overboard and was drowned. He addressed him and asked him the cause of his misfortune. Palinurus replied that the rudder was carried away, and he, clinging to it, was swept away with it. He besought Æneas most urgently to extend to him his hand and take him in company to the opposite shore. But the Sibyl rebuked him for the wish thus to transgress the laws of Pluto; but consoled him by informing him that the people of the shore where his body had been wafted by the waves should be stirred up by prodigies to give it due burial, and that the promontory should bear the name of Cape Palinurus, which it does to this day. Leaving Palinurus consoled by these words, they approached the boat. Charon, fixing his eyes sternly upon the advancing warrior, demanded by what right he, living and armed, approached that shore. To which the Sibyl replied that they would commit no violence, that Æneas's only object was to see his father, and finally exhibited the golden branch, at sight of which Charon's

wrath relaxed, and he made haste to turn his bark to the shore, and receive them on board. The boat, adapted only to the light freight of bodiless spirits, groaned under the weight of the hero. They were soon conveyed to the opposite shore. There they were encountered by the three-headed dog, Cerberus, with his necks bristling with snakes. He barked with all his three throats till the Sibyl threw him a medicated cake which he eagerly devoured, and then stretched himself out in his den and fell asleep. Æneas and the Sibyl sprang to land. The first sound that struck their ears was the wailing of young children, who had died on the threshold of life, and near to these were they who had perished under false charges. Minos presides over them as judge, and examines the deeds of each. The next class was of those who had died by their own hand, hating life and seeking refuge in death. O how willingly would they now endure poverty, labor, and any other infliction, if they might but return to life! Next were situated the regions of sadness, divided off into retired paths, leading through groves of myrtle. Here roamed those who had fallen victims to unrequited love, not freed from pain even by death itself. Among these, Æneas thought he descried the form of Dido, with a wound still recent. In the dim light he was for a moment uncertain, but approaching, perceived it was indeed herself. Tears fell from his eyes, and he addressed her in the accents of love. "Unhappy Dido! was then the rumor true that you had perished? and was I, alas! the cause? I call the gods to witness that my departure from you was reluctant, and in obedience to the commands of Jove; nor could I believe that my absence would cost you so dear. Stop, I beseech you, and refuse me not a last farewell." She stood for a moment with averted countenance, and eyes fixed on the ground, and then silently passed on, as insensible to his pleadings as a rock. Æneas followed for some distance; then, with a heavy heart, rejoined his companion and resumed his route.

They next entered the fields where roam the heroes who have fallen in battle. Here they saw many shades

of Grecian and Trojan warriors. The Trojans thronged around him, and could not be satisfied with the sight. They asked the cause of his coming, and plied him with innumerable questions. But the Greeks, at the sight of his armor glittering through the murky atmosphere, recognized the hero, and filled with terror turned their backs and fled, as they used to do on the plains of Troy.

Æneas would have lingered long with his Trojan friends, but the Sibyl hurried him away. They next came to a place where the road divided, the one leading to Elysium, the other to the regions of the condemned. Æneas beheld on one side the walls of a mighty city, around which Phlegethon rolled its fiery waters. Before him was the gate of adamant that neither gods nor men can break through. An iron tower stood by the gate, on which Tisiphone, the avenging Fury, kept guard. From the city were heard groans, and the sound of the scourge, the creaking of iron, and the clanking of chains. Æneas, horror-struck, inquired of his guide what crimes were those whose punishments produced the sounds he heard? The Sibyl answered, "Here is the judgment hall of Rhadamanthus, who brings to light crimes done in life, which the perpetrator vainly thought impenetrably hid. Tisiphone applies her whip of scorpions, and delivers the offender over to her sister Furies." At this moment with horrid clang the brazen gates unfolded, and Æneas saw within a Hydra with fifty heads guarding the entrance. The Sibyl told him that the gulf of Tartarus descended deep, so that its recesses were as far beneath their feet as heaven was high above their heads. In the bottom of this pit, the Titan race, who warred against the gods, lie prostrate; Salmoneus, also, who presumed to vie with Jupiter, and built a bridge of brass over which he drove his chariot that the sound might resemble thunder, launching flaming brands at his people in imitation of lightning, till Jupiter struck him with a real thunderbolt, and taught him the difference between mortal weapons and divine. Here, also, is Tityus, the giant, whose form is so immense that as he lies he stretches over nine acres, while a vulture preys upon his liver, which as fast as it is

devoured grows again, so that his punishment will have no end.

Æneas saw groups seated at tables loaded with dainties, while near by stood a Fury who snatched away the viands from their lips as fast as they prepared to taste them. Others beheld suspended over their heads huge rocks, threatening to fall, keeping them in a state of constant alarm. These were they who had hated their brothers, or struck their parents, or defrauded the friends who trusted them, or who, having grown rich, kept their money to themselves, and gave no share to others; the last being the most numerous class. Here also were those who had violated the marriage vow, or fought in a bad cause, or failed in fidelity to their employers. Here was one who had sold his country for gold, another who perverted the laws, making them say one thing to-day and another to-morrow.

Ixion was there, fastened to the circumference of a wheel ceaselessly revolving; and Sisyphus, whose task was to roll a huge stone up to a hill-top, but when the steep was well-nigh gained, the rock, repulsed by some sudden force, rushed again headlong down to the plain. Again he toiled at it, while the sweat bathed all his weary limbs, but all to no effect. There was Tantalus, who stood in a pool, his chin level with the water, yet he was parched with thirst, and found nothing to assuage it; for when he bowed his hoary head, eager to quaff, the water fled away, leaving the ground at his feet all dry. Tall trees laden with fruit stooped their heads to him, pears, pomegranates, apples, and luscious figs; but when with a sudden grasp he tried to seize them winds whirled them high above his reach.

The Sibyl now warned Æneas that it was time to turn from these melancholy regions and seek the city of the blessed. They passed through a middle tract of darkness, and came upon the Elysian fields, the groves where the happy reside. They breathed a freer air, and saw all objects clothed in a purple light. The region has a sun and stars of its own. The inhabitants were enjoying themselves in various ways, some in sports on the grassy turf, in games of strength or skill,

others dancing or singing. Orpheus struck the chords of his lyre, and called forth ravishing sounds. Here Æneas saw the founders of the Trojan state, magnanimous heroes who lived in happier times. He gazed with admiration on the war chariots and glittering arms now reposing in disuse. Spears stood fixed in the ground, and the horses, unharnessed, roamed over the plain. The same pride in splendid armor and generous steeds which the old heroes felt in life, accompanied them here. He saw another group feasting and listening to the strains of music. They were in a laurel grove, whence the great river Po has its origin, and flows out among men. Here dwelt those who fell by wounds received in their country's cause, holy priests also, and poets who have uttered thoughts worthy of Apollo, and others who have contributed to cheer and adorn life by their discoveries in the useful arts, and have made their memory blessed by rendering service to mankind. They wore snow-white fillets about their brows. The Sibyl addressed a group of these, and inquired where Anchises was to be found. They were directed where to seek him, and soon found him in a verdant valley, where he was contemplating the ranks of his posterity, their destinies and worthy deeds to be achieved in coming times. When he recognized Æneas approaching, he stretched out both hands to him, while tears flowed freely. "Have you come at last," said he, "long expected, and do I behold you after such perils past? O my son, how have I trembled for you as I have watched your career!" To which Æneas replied, "O father! your image was always before me to guide and guard me." Then he endeavored to enfold his father in his embrace, but his arms enclosed only an unsubstantial image.

Æneas perceived before him a spacious valley, with trees gently waving to the wind, a tranquil landscape, through which the river Lethe flowed. Along the banks of the stream wandered a countless multitude, numerous as insects in the summer air. Æneas, with surprise, inquired who were these. Anchises answered, "They are souls to which bodies are to be given in due time. Meanwhile they dwell on Lethe's bank, and drink

oblivion of their former lives." "O father!" said Æneas, "is it possible that any can be so in love with life as to wish to leave these tranquil seats for the upper world?" Anchises replied by explaining the plan of creation. The Creator, he told him, originally made the material of which souls are composed of the four elements, fire, air, earth, and water, all which when united took the form of the most excellent part, fire, and became *flame*. This material was scattered like seed among the heavenly bodies, the sun, moon, and stars. Of this seed the inferior gods created man and all other animals, mingling it with various proportions of earth, by which its purity was alloyed and reduced. Thus, the more earth predominates in the composition the less pure is the individual; and we see men and women with their full-grown bodies have not the purity of childhood. So in proportion to the time which the union of body and soul has lasted is the impurity contracted by the spiritual part. This impurity must be purged away after death, which is done by ventilating the souls in the current of winds, or merging them in water, or burning out their impurities by fire. Some few, of whom Anchises intimates that he is one, are admitted at once to Elysium, there to remain. But the rest, after the impurities of earth are purged away, are sent back to life endowed with new bodies, having had the remembrance of their former lives effectually washed away by the waters of Lethe. Some, however, there still are, so thoroughly corrupted, that they are not fit to be intrusted with human bodies, and these are made into brute animals, lions, tigers, cats, dogs, monkeys, etc. This is what the ancients called Metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls; a doctrine which is still held by the natives of India, who scruple to destroy the life even of the most insignificant animal, not knowing but it may be one of their relations in an altered form.

Anchises, having explained so much, proceeded to point out to Æneas individuals of his race, who were hereafter to be born, and to relate to him the exploits they should perform in the world. After this he reverted to the present, and told his son of the events that

remained to him to be accomplished before the complete establishment of himself and his followers in Italy. Wars were to be waged, battles fought, a bride to be won, and in the result a Trojan state founded, from which should rise the Roman power, to be in time the sovereign of the world.

Æneas and the Sibyl then took leave of Anchises, and returned by some short cut, which the poet does not explain, to the upper world.

ELYSIUM

Virgil, we have seen, places his Elysium under the earth, and assigns it for a residence to the spirits of the blessed. But in Homer Elysium forms no part of the realms of the dead. He places it on the west of the earth, near Ocean, and describes it as a happy land, where there is neither snow, nor cold, nor rain, and always fanned by the delightful breezes of Zephyrus. Hither favored heroes pass without dying and live happy under the rule of Rhadamanthus. The Elysium of Hesiod and Pindar is in the Isles of the Blessed, or Fortunate Islands, in the Western Ocean. From these sprang the legend of the happy island Atlantis. This blissful region may have been wholly imaginary, but possibly may have sprung from the reports of some storm-driven mariners who had caught a glimpse of the coast of America.

J. R. Lowell, in one of his shorter poems, claims for the present age some of the privileges of that happy realm. Addressing the Past, he says:

"Whatever of true life there was in thee,
Leaps in our age's veins.

Here, 'mid the bleak waves of our strife and care,
Float the green 'Fortunate Isles,'
Where all thy hero-spirits dwell and share
Our martyrdoms and toils.
The present moves attended
With all of brave and excellent and fair
That made the old time splendid."

Milton also alludes to the same fable in "Paradise Lost," Book III., l. 568:

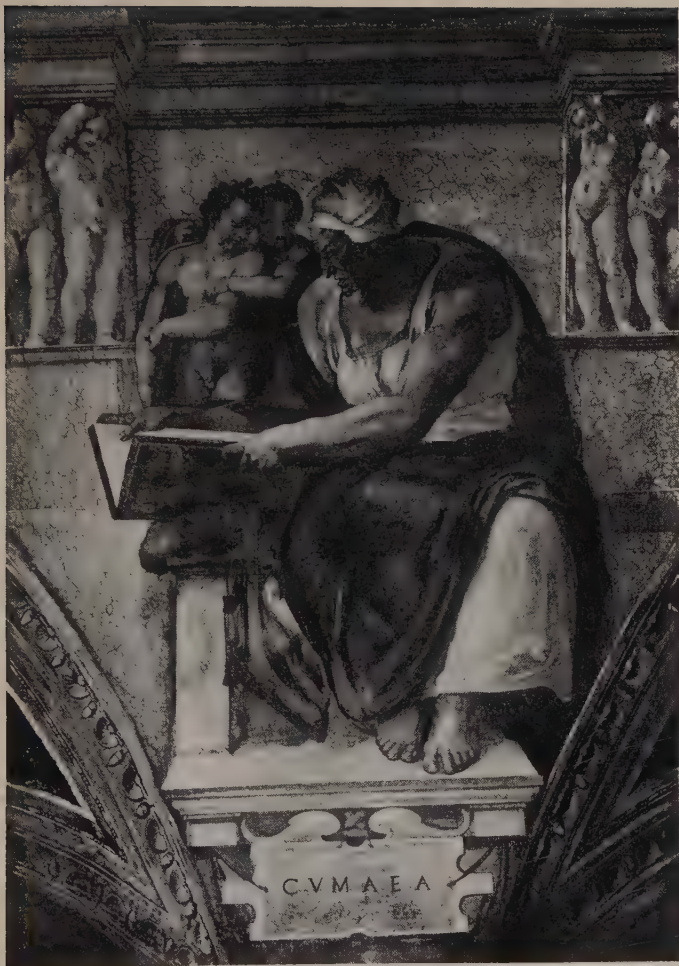
"Like those Hesperian gardens famed of old,
Fortunate fields and groves and flowery vales,
Thrice happy isles."

And in Book II. he characterizes the rivers of Erebus according to the meaning of their names in the Greek language:

"Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate,
Sad Acheron of sorrow black and deep;
Cocytus named of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful stream; fierce Phlegethon
Whose waves of torrent fire inflame with rage.
Far off from these a slow and silent stream,
Lethe, the river of oblivion, rolls
Her watery labyrinth, whereof who drinks
Forthwith his former state and being forgets,
Forgets both joy and grief, pleasure and pain."

THE SIBYL

As Æneas and the Sibyl pursued their way back to earth, he said to her, "Whether thou be a goddess or a mortal beloved of the gods, by me thou shalt always be held in reverence. When I reach the upper air I will cause a temple to be built to thy honor, and will myself bring offerings." "I am no goddess," said the Sibyl; "I have no claim to sacrifice or offering. I am mortal; yet if I could have accepted the love of Apollo I might have been immortal. He promised me the fulfilment of my wish, if I would consent to be his. I took a handful of sand, and holding it forth, said, 'Grant me to see as many birthdays as there are sand grains in my hand.' Unluckily I forgot to ask for enduring youth. This also he would have granted, could I have accepted his love, but offended at my refusal, he allowed me to grow old. My youth and youthful strength fled long ago. I have lived seven hundred years, and to equal the number of the sand grains I have still to see three hundred springs and three hundred harvests. My body shrinks up as years increase, and in time, I shall be lost to sight, but my voice will remain, and future ages will respect my sayings."



THE CUMEAN SIBYL.

From painting by Michael Angelo. Sistine Chapel.

These concluding words of the Sibyl alluded to her prophetic power. In her cave she was accustomed to inscribe on leaves gathered from the trees the names and fates of individuals. The leaves thus inscribed were arranged in order within the cave, and might be consulted by her votaries. But if perchance at the opening of the door the wind rushed in and dispersed the leaves the Sibyl gave no aid to restoring them again, and the oracle was irreparably lost.

The following legend of the Sibyl is fixed at a later date. In the reign of one of the Tarquins there appeared before the king a woman who offered him nine books for sale. The king refused to purchase them, whereupon the woman went away and burned three of the books, and returning offered the remaining books for the same price she had asked for the nine. The king again rejected them; but when the woman, after burning three books more, returned and asked for the three remaining the same price which she had before asked for the nine, his curiosity was excited, and he purchased the books. They were found to contain the destinies of the Roman state. They were kept in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, preserved in a stone chest, and allowed to be inspected only by especial officers appointed for that duty, who, on great occasions, consulted them and interpreted their oracles to the people.

There were various Sibyls; but the Cumæan Sibyl, of whom Ovid and Virgil write, is the most celebrated of them. Ovid's story of her life protracted to one thousand years may be intended to represent the various Sibyls as being only reappearances of one and the same individual.

Young, in the "Night Thoughts," alludes to the Sibyl. Speaking of Worldly Wisdom, he says:

"If future fate she plans 'tis all in leaves,
Like Sibyl, unsubstantial, fleeting bliss;
At the first blast it vanishes in air.

As worldly schemes resemble Sibyl's leaves,
The good man's days to Sibyl's books compare,
The price still rising as in number less."

CHAPTER XXXIII

CAMILLA—EVANDER—NISUS AND EURYALUS—MEZENTIUS
—TURNUS

ÆNEAS, having parted from the Sibyl and rejoined his fleet, coasted along the shores of Italy and cast anchor in the mouth of the Tiber. The poet, having brought his hero to this spot, the destined termination of his wanderings, invokes his Muse to tell him the situation of things at that eventful moment. Latinus, third in descent from Saturn, ruled the country. He was now old and had no male descendant, but had one charming daughter, Lavinia, who was sought in marriage by many neighboring chiefs, one of whom, Turnus, king of the Rutulians, was favored by the wishes of her parents. But Latinus had been warned in a dream by his father Faunus, that the destined husband of Lavinia should come from a foreign land. From that union should spring a race destined to subdue the world.

Our readers will remember that in the conflict with the Harpies one of those half-human birds had threatened the Trojans with dire sufferings. In particular she predicted that before their wanderings ceased they should be pressed by hunger to devour their tables. This portent now came true; for as they took their scanty meal, seated on the grass, the men placed their hard biscuit on their laps, and put thereon whatever their gleanings in the woods supplied. Having despatched the latter they finished by eating the crusts. Seeing which, the boy Iulus said playfully, "See, we are eating our tables." Æneas caught the words and accepted the omen. "All hail, promised land!" he exclaimed, "this is our home, this our country." He then took measures to find out who were the present inhabitants of the land, and who their rulers. A hundred chosen men were sent to the village of Latinus, bearing presents and a request for friendship and alliance. They went and were favorably received. Latinus immediately concluded that

the Trojan hero was no other than the promised son-in-law announced by the oracle. He cheerfully granted his alliance and sent back the messengers mounted on steeds from his stables, and loaded with gifts and friendly messages.

Juno, seeing things go thus prosperously for the Trojans, felt her old animosity revive, summoned Alecto from Erebus, and sent her to stir up discord. The Fury first took possession of the queen, Amata, and roused her to oppose in every way the new alliance. Alecto then speeded to the city of Turnus, and assuming the form of an old priestess, informed him of the arrival of the foreigners and of the attempts of their prince to rob him of his bride. Next she turned her attention to the camp of the Trojans. There she saw the boy Iulus and his companions amusing themselves with hunting. She sharpened the scent of the dogs, and led them to rouse up from the thicket a tame stag, the favorite of Silvia, the daughter of Tyrrheus, the king's herdsman. A javelin from the hand of Iulus wounded the animal, and he had only strength left to run homewards, and died at his mistress's feet. Her cries and tears roused her brothers and the herdsmen, and they, seizing whatever weapons came to hand, furiously assaulted the hunting party. These were protected by their friends, and the herdsmen were finally driven back with the loss of two of their number.

These things were enough to rouse the storm of war, and the queen, Turnus, and the peasants all urged the old king to drive the strangers from the country. He resisted as long as he could, but, finding his opposition unavailing, finally gave way and retreated to his retirement.

OPENING THE GATES OF JANUS

It was the custom of the country, when war was to be undertaken, for the chief magistrate, clad in his robes of office, with solemn pomp to open the gates of the temple of Janus, which were kept shut as long as peace endured. His people now urged the old king to perform that solemn office, but he refused to do so. While they

contested, Juno herself, descending from the skies, smote the doors with irresistible force, and burst them open. Immediately the whole country was in a flame. The people rushed from every side breathing nothing but war.

Turnus was recognized by all as leader; others joined as allies, chief of whom was Mezentius, a brave and able soldier, but of detestable cruelty. He had been the chief of one of the neighboring cities, but his people drove him out. With him was joined his son Lausus, a generous youth, worthy of a better sire.

CAMILLA

Camilla, the favorite of Diana, a huntress and warrior, after the fashion of the Amazons, came with her band of mounted followers, including a select number of her own sex, and ranged herself on the side of Turnus. This maiden had never accustomed her fingers to the distaff or the loom, but had learned to endure the toils of war, and in speed to outstrip the wind. It seemed as if she might run over the standing corn without crushing it, or over the surface of the water without dipping her feet. Camilla's history had been singular from the beginning. Her father, Metabus, driven from his city by civil discord, carried with him in his flight his infant daughter. As he fled through the woods, his enemies in hot pursuit, he reached the bank of the river Amazenus, which, swelled by rains, seemed to debar a passage. He paused for a moment, then decided what to do. He tied the infant to his lance with wrappers of bark, and poising the weapon in his upraised hand thus addressed Diana: "Goddess of the woods! I consecrate this maid to you;" then hurled the weapon with its burden to the opposite bank. The spear flew across the roaring water. His pursuers were already upon him, but he plunged into the river and swam across, and found the spear, with the infant safe on the other side. Thenceforth he lived among the shepherds and brought up his daughter in woodland arts. While a child she was taught to use the bow and throw the javelin. With her sling she could

bring down the crane or the wild swan. Her dress was a tiger's skin. Many mothers sought her for a daughter-in-law, but she continued faithful to Diana and repelled the thought of marriage.

EVANDER

Such were the formidable allies that ranged themselves against Æneas. It was night and he lay stretched in sleep on the bank of the river under the open heavens. The god of the stream, Father Tiber, seemed to raise his head above the willows and to say, "O goddess-born, destined possessor of the Latin realms, this is the promised land, here is to be your home, here shall terminate the hostility of the heavenly powers, if only you faithfully persevere. There are friends not far distant. Prepare your boats and row up my stream; I will lead you to Evander, the Arcadian chief, he has long been at strife with Turnus and the Rutulians, and is prepared to become an ally of yours. Rise! offer your vows to Juno, and deprecate her anger. When you have achieved your victory then think of me." Æneas woke and paid immediate obedience to the friendly vision. He sacrificed to Juno, and invoked the god of the river and all his tributary fountains to lend their aid. Then for the first time a vessel filled with armed warriors floated on the stream of the Tiber. The river smoothed its waves, and bade its current flow gently, while, impelled by the vigorous strokes of the rowers, the vessels shot rapidly up the stream.

About the middle of the day they came in sight of the scattered buildings of the infant town, where in after times the proud city of Rome grew, whose glory reached the skies. By chance the old king, Evander, was that day celebrating annual solemnities in honor of Hercules and all the gods. Pallas, his son, and all the chiefs of the little commonwealth stood by. When they saw the tall ship gliding onward near the wood, they were alarmed at the sight, and rose from the tables. But Pallas forbade the solemnities to be interrupted, and seizing a weapon, stepped forward to the river's bank.

He called aloud, demanding who they were, and what their object. Æneas, holding forth an olive-branch, replied, "We are Trojans, friends to you, and enemies to the Rutulians. We seek Evander, and offer to join our arms with yours." Pallas, in amaze at the sound of so great a name, invited them to land, and when Æneas touched the shore he seized his hand, and held it long in friendly grasp. Proceeding through the wood, they joined the king and his party and were most favorably received. Seats were provided for them at the tables, and the repast proceeded.

INFANT ROME

When the solemnities were ended all moved towards the city. The king, bending with age, walked between his son and Æneas, taking the arm of one or the other of them, and with much variety of pleasing talk shortening the way. Æneas with delight looked and listened, observing all the beauties of the scene, and learning much of heroes renowned in ancient times. Evander said, "These extensive groves were once inhabited by fauns and nymphs, and a rude race of men who sprang from the trees themselves, and had neither laws nor social culture. They knew not how to yoke the cattle nor raise a harvest, nor provide from present abundance for future want; but browsed like beasts upon the leafy boughs, or fed voraciously on their hunted prey. Such were they when Saturn, expelled from Olympus by his sons, came among them and drew together the fierce savages, formed them into society, and gave them laws. Such peace and plenty ensued that men ever since have called his reign the golden age; but by degrees far other times succeeded, and the thirst of gold and the thirst of blood prevailed. The land was a prey to successive tyrants, till fortune and resistless destiny brought me hither, an exile from my native land, Arcadia."

Having thus said, he showed him the Tarpeian rock, and the rude spot then overgrown with bushes where in after times the Capitol rose in all its magnificence. He next pointed to some dismantled walls, and said, "Here

stood Janiculum, built by Janus, and there Saturnia, the town of Saturn." Such discourse brought them to the cottage of poor Evander, whence they saw the lowing herds roaming over the plain where now the proud and stately Forum stands. They entered, and a couch was spread for Æneas, well stuffed with leaves, and covered with the skin of a Libyan bear.

Next morning, awakened by the dawn and the shrill song of birds beneath the eaves of his low mansion, old Evander rose. Clad in a tunic, and a panther's skin thrown over his shoulders, with sandals on his feet and his good sword girded to his side, he went forth to seek his guest. Two mastiffs followed him, his whole retinue and body guard. He found the hero attended by his faithful Achates, and, Pallas soon joining them, the old king spoke thus:

"Illustrious Trojan, it is but little we can do in so great a cause. Our state is feeble, hemmed in on one side by the river, on the other by the Rutulians. But I propose to ally you with a people numerous and rich, to whom fate has brought you at the propitious moment. The Etruscans hold the country beyond the river. Mezentius was their king, a monster of cruelty, who invented unheard-of torments to gratify his vengeance. He would fasten the dead to the living, hand to hand and face to face, and leave the wretched victims to die in that dreadful embrace. At length the people cast him out, him and his house. They burned his palace and slew his friends. He escaped and took refuge with Turnus, who protects him with arms. The Etruscans demand that he shall be given up to deserved punishment, and would ere now have attempted to enforce their demand; but their priests restrain them, telling them that it is the will of heaven that no native of the land shall guide them to victory, and that their destined leader must come from across the sea. They have offered the crown to me, but I am too old to undertake such great affairs, and my son is native-born, which precludes him from the choice. You, equally by birth and time of life, and fame in arms, pointed out by the gods, have but to appear to be hailed at once as their leader. With you

I will join Pallas, my son, my only hope and comfort. Under you he shall learn the art of war, and strive to emulate your great exploits."

Then the king ordered horses to be furnished for the Trojan chiefs, and Æneas, with a chosen band of followers and Pallas accompanying, mounted and took the way to the Etruscan city,¹ having sent back the rest of his party in the ships. Æneas and his band safely arrived at the Etruscan camp and were received with open arms by Tarchon and his countrymen.

NISUS AND EURYALUS

In the meanwhile Turnus had collected his bands and made all necessary preparations for the war. Juno sent Iris to him with a message inciting him to take advantage of the absence of Æneas and surprise the Trojan camp. Accordingly the attempt was made, but the Trojans were found on their guard, and having received strict orders from Æneas not to fight in his absence, they lay still in their intrenchments, and resisted all the efforts of the Rutulians to draw them into the field. Night coming on, the army of Turnus, in high spirits at their fancied superiority, feasted and enjoyed themselves, and finally stretched themselves on the field and slept secure.

In the camp of the Trojans things were far otherwise. There all was watchfulness and anxiety and impatience for Æneas's return. Nisus stood guard at the entrance of the camp, and Euryalus, a youth distinguished above all in the army for graces of person and fine qualities, was with him. These two were friends and brothers in arms. Nisus said to his friend, "Do you perceive what confidence and carelessness the enemy display? Their lights are few and dim, and the men seem all oppressed with wine or sleep. You know how anxiously our chiefs wish to send to Æneas, and to get intelligence from him. Now, I am strongly moved to make my way through the enemy's camp and to go in search

¹ The poet here inserts a famous line which is thought to imitate in its sound the galloping of horses. It may be thus translated: "Then struck the hoofs of the steeds on the ground with a four-footed trampling."—See Proverbial Expressions.

of our chief. If I succeed, the glory of the deed will be reward enough for me, and if they judge the service deserves anything more, let them pay it to you."

Euryalus, all on fire with the love of adventure, replied, "Would you, then, Nisus, refuse to share your enterprise with me? And shall I let you go into such danger alone? Not so my brave father brought me up, nor so have I planned for myself when I joined the standard of Æneas, and resolved to hold my life cheap in comparison with honor." Nisus replied, "I doubt it not, my friend; but you know the uncertain event of such an undertaking, and whatever may happen to me, I wish you to be safe. You are younger than I and have more of life in prospect. Nor can I be the cause of such grief to your mother, who has chosen to be here in the camp with you rather than stay and live in peace with the other matrons in Acestes' city." Euryalus replied, "Say no more. In vain you seek arguments to dissuade me. I am fixed in the resolution to go with you. Let us lose no time." They called the guard, and committing the watch to them, sought the general's tent. They found the chief officers in consultation, deliberating how they should send notice to Æneas of their situation. The offer of the two friends was gladly accepted, themselves loaded with praises and promised the most liberal rewards in case of success. Iulus especially addressed Euryalus, assuring him of his lasting friendship. Euryalus replied, "I have but one boon to ask. My aged mother is with me in the camp. For me she left the Trojan soil, and would not stay behind with the other matrons at the city of Acestes. I go now without taking leave of her. I could not bear her tears nor set at nought her entreaties. But do thou, I beseech you, comfort her in her distress. Promise me that and I shall go more boldly into whatever dangers may present themselves." Iulus and the other chiefs were moved to tears, and promised to do all his request. "Your mother shall be mine," said Iulus, "and all that I have promised to you shall be made good to her, if you do not return to receive it."

The two friends left the camp and plunged at once into the midst of the enemy. They found no watch,

no sentinels posted, but, all about, the sleeping soldiers strewn on the grass and among the wagons. The laws of war at that early day did not forbid a brave man to slay a sleeping foe, and the two Trojans slew, as they passed, such of the enemy as they could without exciting alarm. In one tent Euryalus made prize of a helmet brilliant with gold and plumes. They had passed through the enemy's ranks without being discovered, but now suddenly appeared a troop directly in front of them, which, under Volscens, their leader, were approaching the camp. The glittering helmet of Euryalus caught their attention, and Volscens hailed the two, and demanded who and whence they were. They made no answer, but plunged into the wood. The horsemen scattered in all directions to intercept their flight. Nisus had eluded pursuit and was out of danger, but Euryalus being missing he turned back to seek him. He again entered the wood and soon came within sound of voices. Looking through the thicket he saw the whole band surrounding Euryalus with noisy questions. What should he do? how extricate the youth, or would it be better to die with him.

Raising his eyes to the moon, which now shone clear, he said, "Goddess! favor my effort!" and aiming his javelin at one of the leaders of the troop, struck him in the back and stretched him on the plain with a death-blow. In the midst of their amazement another weapon flew and another of the party fell dead. Volscens, the leader, ignorant whence the darts came, rushed sword in hand upon Euryalus. "You shall pay the penalty of both," he said, and would have plunged the sword into his bosom, when Nisus, who from his concealment saw the peril of his friend, rushed forward exclaiming, "'Twas I, 'twas I; turn your swords against me, Rutulians, I did it; he only followed me as a friend." While he spoke the sword fell, and pierced the comely bosom of Euryalus. His head fell over on his shoulder, like a flower cut down by the plough. Nisus rushed upon Volscens and plunged his sword into his body, and was himself slain on the instant by numberless blows.

MEZENTIUS

Æneas, with his Etrurian allies, arrived on the scene of action in time to rescue his beleaguered camp; and now the two armies being nearly equal in strength, the war began in good earnest. We cannot find space for all the details, but must simply record the fate of the principal characters whom we have introduced to our readers. The tyrant Mezentius, finding himself engaged against his revolting subjects, raged like a wild beast. He slew all who dared to withstand him, and put the multitude to flight wherever he appeared. At last he encountered Æneas, and the armies stood still to see the issue. Mezentius threw his spear, which striking Æneas's shield glanced off and hit Anthon. He was a Grecian by birth, who had left Argos, his native city, and followed Evander into Italy. The poet says of him with simple pathos which has made the words proverbial, "He fell, unhappy, by a wound intended for another, looked up at the skies, and dying remembered sweet Argos."¹ Æneas now in turn hurled his lance. It pierced the shield of Mezentius, and wounded him in the thigh. Lausus, his son, could not bear the sight, but rushed forward and interposed himself, while the followers pressed round Mezentius and bore him away. Æneas held his sword suspended over Lausus and delayed to strike, but the furious youth pressed on and he was compelled to deal the fatal blow. Lausus fell, and Æneas bent over him in pity. "Hapless youth," he said, "what can I do for you worthy of your praise? Keep those arms in which you glory, and fear not but that your body shall be restored to your friends, and have due funeral honors." So saying, he called the timid followers and delivered the body into their hands.

Mezentius meanwhile had been borne to the riverside, and washed his wound. Soon the news reached him of Lausus's death, and rage and despair supplied the place of strength. He mounted his horse and dashed into the thickest of the fight, seeking Æneas. Having found him,

¹ See Proverbial Expressions.

he rode round him in a circle, throwing one javelin after another, while Æneas stood fenced with his shield, turning every way to meet them. At last, after Mezentius had three times made the circuit, Æneas threw his lance directly at the horse's head. It pierced his temples and he fell, while a shout from both armies rent the skies. Mezentius asked no mercy, but only that his body might be spared the insults of his revolted subjects, and be buried in the same grave with his son. He received the fatal stroke not unprepared, and poured out his life and his blood together.

PALLAS, CAMILLA, TURNUS

While these things were doing in one part of the field, in another Turnus encountered the youthful Pallas. The contest between champions so unequally matched could not be doubtful. Pallas bore himself bravely, but fell by the lance of Turnus. The victor almost relented when he saw the brave youth lying dead at his feet, and spared to use the privilege of a conqueror in despoiling him of his arms. The belt only, adorned with studs and carvings of gold, he took and clasped round his own body. The rest he remitted to the friends of the slain.

After the battle there was a cessation of arms for some days to allow both armies to bury their dead. In this interval Æneas challenged Turnus to decide the contest by single combat, but Turnus evaded the challenge. Another battle ensued, in which Camilla, the virgin warrior, was chiefly conspicuous. Her deeds of valor surpassed those of the bravest warriors, and many Trojans and Etruscans fell pierced with her darts or struck down by her battle-axe. At last an Etruscan named Aruns, who had watched her long, seeking for some advantage, observed her pursuing a flying enemy whose splendid armor offered a tempting prize. Intent on the chase she observed not her danger, and the javelin of Aruns struck her and inflicted a fatal wound. She fell and breathed her last in the arms of her attendant maidens. But Diana, who beheld her fate, suffered not her slaughter to be unavenged. Aruns, as he stole away,

glad, but frightened, was struck by a secret arrow, launched by one of the nymphs of Diana's train, and died ignobly and unknown.

At length the final conflict took place between Æneas and Turnus. Turnus had avoided the contest as long as he could, but at last, impelled by the ill success of his arms and by the murmurs of his followers, he braced himself to the conflict. It could not be doubtful. On the side of Æneas were the expressed decree of destiny, the aid of his goddess-mother at every emergency, and impenetrable armor fabricated by Vulcan, at her request, for her son. Turnus, on the other hand, was deserted by his celestial allies, Juno having been expressly forbidden by Jupiter to assist him any longer. Turnus threw his lance, but it recoiled harmless from the shield of Æneas. The Trojan hero then threw his, which penetrated the shield of Turnus, and pierced his thigh. Then Turnus's fortitude forsook him and he begged for mercy; and Æneas would have given him his life, but at the instant his eye fell on the belt of Pallas, which Turnus had taken from the slaughtered youth. Instantly his rage revived, and exclaiming, "Pallas immolates thee with this blow," he thrust him through with his sword.

Here the poem of the "Æneid" closes, and we are left to infer that Æneas, having triumphed over his foes, obtained Lavinia for his bride. Tradition adds that he founded his city, and called it after her name, Lavinium. His son Iulus founded Alba Longa, which was the birthplace of Romulus and Remus and the cradle of Rome itself.

There is an allusion to Camilla in those well-known lines of Pope, in which, illustrating the rule that "the sound should be an echo to the sense," he says:

"When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line too labors and the words move slow.
Not so when swift Camilla scours the plain,
Flies o'er th' unbending corn or skims along the main."

—*Essay on Criticism.*

CHAPTER XXXIV

PYTHAGORAS—EGYPTIAN DEITIES—ORACLES

PYTHAGORAS

THE teachings of Anchises to Æneas, respecting the nature of the human soul, were in conformity with the doctrines of the Pythagoreans. Pythagoras (born five hundred and forty years B.C.) was a native of the island of Samos, but passed the chief portion of his life at Crotona in Italy. He is therefore sometimes called "the Samian," and sometimes "the philosopher of Crotona." When young he travelled extensively, and it is said visited Egypt, where he was instructed by the priests in all their learning, and afterwards journeyed to the East, and visited the Persian and Chaldean Magi, and the Brahmins of India.

At Crotona, where he finally established himself, his extraordinary qualities collected round him a great number of disciples. The inhabitants were notorious for luxury and licentiousness, but the good effects of his influence were soon visible. Sobriety and temperance succeeded. Six hundred of the inhabitants became his disciples and enrolled themselves in a society to aid each other in the pursuit of wisdom, uniting their property in one common stock for the benefit of the whole. They were required to practise the greatest purity and simplicity of manners. The first lesson they learned was *silence*; for a time they were required to be only hearers. "He [Pythagoras] said so" (*Ipse dixit*), was to be held by them as sufficient, without any proof. It was only the advanced pupils, after years of patient submission, who were allowed to ask questions and to state objections.

Pythagoras considered *numbers* as the essence and principle of all things, and attributed to them a real and distinct existence; so that, in his view, they were the elements out of which the universe was constructed.

How he conceived this process has never been satisfactorily explained. He traced the various forms and phenomena of the world to numbers as their basis and essence. The "Monad" or *unit* he regarded as the source of all numbers. The number *Two* was imperfect, and the cause of increase and division. *Three* was called the number of the whole because it had a beginning, middle, and end. *Four*, representing the square, is in the highest degree perfect; and *Ten*, as it contains the sum of the four prime numbers, comprehends all musical and arithmetical proportions, and denotes the system of the world. .

As the numbers proceed from the monad, so he regarded the pure and simple essence of the Deity as the source of all the forms of nature. Gods, demons, and heroes are emanations of the Supreme, and there is a fourth emanation, the human soul. This is immortal, and when freed from the fetters of the body passes to the habitation of the dead, where it remains till it returns to the world, to dwell in some other human or animal body, and at last, when sufficiently purified, it returns to the source from which it proceeded. This doctrine of the transmigration of souls (*metempsychosis*), which was originally Egyptian and connected with the doctrine of reward and punishment of human actions, was the chief cause why the Pythagoreans killed no animals. Ovid represents Pythagoras addressing his disciples in these words: "Souls never die, but always on quitting one abode pass to another. I myself can remember that in the time of the Trojan war I was Euphorbus, the son of Panthus, and fell by the spear of Menelaus. Lately being in the temple of Juno, at Argos, I recognized my shield hung up there among the trophies. All things change, nothing perishes. The soul passes hither and thither, occupying now this body, now that, passing from the body of a beast into that of a man, and thence to a beast's again. As wax is stamped with certain figures, then melted, then stamped anew with others, yet is always the same wax, so the soul, being always the same, yet wears, at different times, different forms. Therefore, if the love of kin-

dred is not extinct in your bosoms, forbear, I entreat you, to violate the life of those who may haply be your own relatives."

Shakspeare, in the "Merchant of Venice," makes Gratiano allude to the metempsychosis, where he says to Shylock:

"Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men; thy currish spirit
Governed a wolf; who hanged for human slaughter
Infused his soul in thee; for thy desires
Are wolfish, bloody, starved and ravenous."

The relation of the notes of the musical scale to numbers, whereby harmony results from vibrations in equal times, and discord from the reverse, led Pythagoras to apply the word "harmony" to the visible creation, meaning by it the just adaptation of parts to each other. This is the idea which Dryden expresses in the beginning of his "Song for St. Cecilia's Day":

"From harmony, from heavenly harmony
This everlasting frame began;
From harmony to harmony
Through all the compass of the notes it ran,
The Diapason closing full in Man."

In the centre of the universe (he taught) there was a central fire, the principle of life. The central fire was surrounded by the earth, the moon, the sun, and the five planets. The distances of the various heavenly bodies from one another were conceived to correspond to the proportions of the musical scale. The heavenly bodies, with the gods who inhabited them, were supposed to perform a choral dance round the central fire, "not without song." It is this doctrine which Shakspeare alludes to when he makes Lorenzo teach astronomy to Jessica in this fashion:

"Look, Jessica, see how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold!

There's not the smallest orb that thou behold'st
 But in his motion like an angel sings,
 Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubim;
 Such harmony is in immortal souls!
 But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
 Doth grossly close it in we cannot hear it."

—*Merchant of Venice*.

The spheres were conceived to be crystalline or glassy fabrics arranged over one another like a nest of bowls reversed. In the substance of each sphere one or more of the heavenly bodies was supposed to be fixed, so as to move with it. As the spheres are transparent we look through them and see the heavenly bodies which they contain and carry round with them. But as these spheres cannot move on one another without friction, a sound is thereby produced which is of exquisite harmony, too fine for mortal ears to recognize. Milton, in his "Hymn on the Nativity," thus alludes to the music of the spheres:

"Ring out, ye crystal spheres!
 Once bless our human ears
 (If ye have power to charm our senses so);
 And let your silver chime
 Move in melodious time,
 And let the base of Heaven's deep organ blow;
 And with your ninefold harmony
 Make up full concert with the angelic symphony."

Pythagoras is said to have invented the lyre. Our own poet Longfellow, in "Verses to a Child," thus relates the story:

"As great Pythagoras of yore,
 Standing beside the blacksmith's door,
 And hearing the hammers as they smote
 The anvils with a different note,
 Stole from the varying tones that hung
 Vibrant on every iron tongue,
 The secret of the sounding wire,
 And formed the seven-chorded lyre."

See also the same poet's "Occultation of Orion"—

"The Samian's great Æolian lyre."

SYBARIS AND CROTONA

Sybaris, a neighboring city to Crotona, was as celebrated for luxury and effeminacy as Crotona for the reverse. The name has become proverbial. J. R. Lowell uses it in this sense in his charming little poem "To the Dandelion":

"Not in mid June the golden cuirassed bee
Feels a more summer-like, warm ravishment
In the white lily's breezy tent
(His conquered Sybaris) than I when first
From the dark green thy yellow circles burst."

A war arose between the two cities, and Sybaris was conquered and destroyed. Milo, the celebrated athlete, led the army of Crotona. Many stories are told of Milo's vast strength, such as his carrying a heifer of four years old upon his shoulders and afterwards eating the whole of it in a single day. The mode of his death is thus related: As he was passing through a forest he saw the trunk of a tree which had been partially split open by wood-cutters, and attempted to rend it further; but the wood closed upon his hands and held him fast, in which state he was attacked and devoured by wolves.

Byron, in his "Ode to Napoleon Bonaparte," alludes to the story of Milo:

"He who of old would rend the oak
Deemed not of the rebound;
Chained by the trunk he vainly broke,
Alone, how looked he round!"

EGYPTIAN DEITIES

The Egyptians acknowledged as the highest deity Amun, afterwards called Zeus, or Jupiter Ammon. Amun manifested himself in his word or will, which created Kneph and Athor, of different sexes. From Kneph and Athor proceeded Osiris and Isis. Osiris was worshipped as the god of the sun, the source of warmth,

life, and fruitfulness, in addition to which he was also regarded as the god of the Nile, who annually visited his wife, Isis (the Earth), by means of an inundation. Serapis or Hermes is sometimes represented as identical with Osiris, and sometimes as a distinct divinity, the ruler of Tartarus and god of medicine. Anubis is the guardian god, represented with a dog's head, emblematic of his character of fidelity and watchfulness. Horus or Harpocrates was the son of Osiris. He is represented seated on a Lotus flower, with his finger on his lips, as the god of Silence.

In one of Moore's "Irish Melodies" is an allusion to Harpocrates:

"Thyself shall, under some rosy bower,
Sit mute, with thy finger on thy lip;
Like him, the boy, who born among
The flowers that on the Nile-stream blush,
Sits ever thus,—his only song
To Earth and Heaven, 'Hush all, hush!'"

MYTH OF OSIRIS AND ISIS

Osiris and Isis were at one time induced to descend to the earth to bestow gifts and blessings on its inhabitants. Isis showed them first the use of wheat and barley, and Osiris made the instruments of agriculture and taught men the use of them, as well as how to harness the ox to the plough. He then gave men laws, the institution of marriage, a civil organization, and taught them how to worship the gods. After he had thus made the valley of the Nile a happy country, he assembled a host with which he went to bestow his blessings upon the rest of the world. He conquered the nations everywhere, but not with weapons, only with music and eloquence. His brother Typhon saw this, and filled with envy and malice sought during his absence to usurp his throne. But Isis, who held the reins of government, frustrated his plans. Still more embittered, he now resolved to kill his brother. This he did in the following manner: Having organized a conspiracy of seventy-two members, he went with them

to the feast which was celebrated in honor of the king's return. He then caused a box or chest to be brought in, which had been made to fit exactly the size of Osiris, and declared that he would give that chest of precious wood to whosoever could get into it. The rest tried in vain, but no sooner was Osiris in it than Typhon and his companions closed the lid and flung the chest into the Nile. When Isis heard of the cruel murder she wept and mourned, and then with her hair shorn, clothed in black and beating her breast, she sought diligently for the body of her husband. In this search she was materially assisted by Anubis, the son of Osiris and Nephthys. They sought in vain for some time; for when the chest, carried by the waves to the shores of Byblos, had become entangled in the reeds that grew at the edge of the water, the divine power that dwelt in the body of Osiris imparted such strength to the shrub that it grew into a mighty tree, enclosing in its trunk the coffin of the god. This tree with its sacred deposit was shortly after felled, and erected as a column in the palace of the king of Phœnicia. But at length by the aid of Anubis and the sacred birds, Isis ascertained these facts, and then went to the royal city. There she offered herself at the palace as a servant, and being admitted, threw off her disguise and appeared as a goddess, surrounded with thunder and lightning. Striking the column with her wand she caused it to split open and give up the sacred coffin. This she seized and returned with it, and concealed it in the depth of a forest, but Typhon discovered it, and cutting the body into fourteen pieces scattered them hither and thither. After a tedious search, Isis found thirteen pieces, the fishes of the Nile having eaten the other. This she replaced by an imitation of sycamore wood, and buried the body at Philæ, which became ever after the great burying place of the nation, and the spot to which pilgrimages were made from all parts of the country. A temple of surpassing magnificence was also erected there in honor of the god, and at every place where one of his limbs had been found minor temples and tombs were built to commemorate the event. Osiris became after

that the tutelar deity of the Egyptians. His soul was supposed always to inhabit the body of the bull Apis, and at his death to transfer itself to his successor.

Apis, the Bull of Memphis, was worshipped with the greatest reverence by the Egyptians. The individual animal who was held to be Apis was recognized by certain signs. It was requisite that he should be quite black, have a white square mark on the forehead, another, in the form of an eagle, on his back, and under his tongue a lump somewhat in the shape of a scarabæus or beetle. As soon as a bull thus marked was found by those sent in search of him, he was placed in a building facing the east, and was fed with milk for four months. At the expiration of this term the priests repaired at new moon, with great pomp, to his habitation and saluted him Apis. He was placed in a vessel magnificently decorated and conveyed down the Nile to Memphis, where a temple, with two chapels and a court for exercise, was assigned to him. Sacrifices were made to him, and once every year, about the time when the Nile began to rise, a golden cup was thrown into the river, and a grand festival was held to celebrate his birthday. The people believed that during this festival the crocodiles forgot their natural ferocity and became harmless. There was, however, one drawback to his happy lot: he was not permitted to live beyond a certain period, and if, when he had attained the age of twenty-five years, he still survived, the priests drowned him in the sacred cistern and then buried him in the temple of Serapis. On the death of this bull, whether it occurred in the course of nature or by violence, the whole land was filled with sorrow and lamentations, which lasted until his successor was found.

We find the following item in one of the newspapers of the day:

"The Tomb of Apis.—The excavations going on at Memphis bid fair to make that buried city as interesting as Pompeii. The monster tomb of Apis is now open, after having lain unknown for centuries."

Milton, in his "Hymn on the Nativity," alludes to

the Egyptian deities, not as imaginary beings, but as real demons, put to flight by the coming of Christ.

"The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
 Isis and Horus and the dog Anubis haste.
 Nor is Osiris seen
 In Memphian grove or green
 Trampling the ¹unshowered grass with lowings loud;
 Nor can he be at rest
 Within his sacred chest;
 Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud.
 In vain with timbrel'd anthems dark
 The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worshipped ark."

Isis was represented in statuary with the head veiled, a symbol of mystery. It is this which Tennyson alludes to in "Maud," IV., 8:

"For the drift of the Maker is dark, an Isis hid by the veil," etc.

ORACLES

Oracle was the name used to denote the place where answers were supposed to be given by any of the divinities to those who consulted them respecting the future. The word was also used to signify the response which was given.

The most ancient Grecian oracle was that of Jupiter at Dodona. According to one account, it was established in the following manner: Two black doves took their flight from Thebes in Egypt. One flew to Dodona in Epirus, and alighting in a grove of oaks, it proclaimed in human language to the inhabitants of the district that they must establish there an oracle of Jupiter. The other dove flew to the temple of Jupiter Ammon in the Libyan Oasis, and delivered a similar command there. Another account is, that they were not doves, but priestesses, who were carried off from Thebes in Egypt by the Phœnicians, and set up oracles at the Oasis and Dodona. The responses of the oracle

¹ There being no rain in Egypt, the grass is "unshowered," and the country depends for its fertility upon the overflowings of the Nile. The ark alluded to in the last line is shown by pictures still remaining on the walls of the Egyptian temples to have been borne by the priests in their religious processions. It probably represented the chest in which Osiris was placed.

were given from the trees, by the branches rustling in the wind, the sounds being interpreted by the priests.

But the most celebrated of the Grecian oracles was that of Apollo at Delphi, a city built on the slopes of Parnassus in Phocis.

It had been observed at a very early period that the goats feeding on Parnassus were thrown into convulsions when they approached a certain long deep cleft in the side of the mountain. This was owing to a peculiar vapor arising out of the cavern, and one of the goatherds was induced to try its effects upon himself. Inhaling the intoxicating air, he was affected in the same manner as the cattle had been, and the inhabitants of the surrounding country, unable to explain the circumstance, imputed the convulsive ravings to which he gave utterance while under the power of the exhalations to a divine inspiration. The fact was speedily circulated widely, and a temple was erected on the spot. The prophetic influence was at first variously attributed to the goddess Earth, to Neptune, Themis, and others, but it was at length assigned to Apollo, and to him alone. A priestess was appointed whose office it was to inhale the hallowed air, and who was named the Pythia. She was prepared for this duty by previous ablution at the fountain of Castalia, and being crowned with laurel was seated upon a tripod similarly adorned, which was placed over the chasm whence the divine afflatus proceeded. Her inspired words while thus situated were interpreted by the priests.

ORACLE OF TROPHONIUS

Besides the oracles of Jupiter and Apollo, at Dodona and Delphi, that of Trophonius in Bœotia was held in high estimation. Trophonius and Agamedes were brothers. They were distinguished architects, and built the temple of Apollo at Delphi, and a treasury for King Hyrieus. In the wall of the treasury they placed a stone, in such a manner that it could be taken out; and by this means, from time to time, purloined the treasure. This amazed Hyrieus, for his locks and seals were un-

touched, and yet his wealth continually diminished. At length he set a trap for the thief and Agamedes was caught. Trophonius, unable to extricate him, and fearing that when found he would be compelled by torture to discover his accomplice, cut off his head. Trophonius himself is said to have been shortly afterwards swallowed up by the earth.

The oracle of Trophonius was at Lebadea in Bœotia. During a great drought the Bœotians, it is said, were directed by the god at Delphi to seek aid of Trophonius at Lebadea. They came thither, but could find no oracle. One of them, however, happening to see a swarm of bees, followed them to a chasm in the earth, which proved to be the place sought.

Peculiar ceremonies were to be performed by the person who came to consult the oracle. After these preliminaries, he descended into the cave by a narrow passage. This place could be entered only in the night. The person returned from the cave by the same narrow passage, but walking backwards. He appeared melancholy and dejected; and hence the proverb which was applied to a person low-spirited and gloomy, "He has been consulting the oracle of Trophonius."

ORACLE OF ÆSCULAPIUS

There were numerous oracles of Æsculapius, but the most celebrated one was at Epidaurus. Here the sick sought responses and the recovery of their health by sleeping in the temple. It has been inferred from the accounts that have come down to us that the treatment of the sick resembled what is now called Animal Magnetism or Mesmerism.

Serpents were sacred to Æsculapius, probably because of a superstition that those animals have a faculty of renewing their youth by a change of skin. The worship of Æsculapius was introduced into Rome in a time of great sickness, and an embassy sent to the temple of Epidaurus to entreat the aid of the god. Æsculapius was propitious, and on the return of the ship accompanied it in the form of a serpent. Arriving in the

river Tiber, the serpent glided from the vessel and took possession of an island in the river, and a temple was there erected to his honor.

ORACLE OF APIS

At Memphis the sacred bull Apis gave answer to those who consulted him by the manner in which he received or rejected what was presented to him. If the bull refused food from the hand of the inquirer it was considered an unfavorable sign, and the contrary when he received it.

It has been a question whether oracular responses ought to be ascribed to mere human contrivance or to the agency of evil spirits. The latter opinion has been most general in past ages. A third theory has been advanced since the phenomena of Mesmerism have attracted attention, that something like the mesmeric trance was induced in the Pythoness, and the faculty of clairvoyance really called into action.

Another question is as to the time when the Pagan oracles ceased to give responses. Ancient Christian writers assert that they became silent at the birth of Christ, and were heard no more after that date. Milton adopts this view in his "Hymn on the Nativity," and in lines of solemn and elevated beauty pictures the consternation of the heathen idols at the advent of the Saviour:

"The oracles are dumb;
No voice or hideous hum
Rings through the arched roof in words deceiving.
Apollo from his shrine
Can no more divine,
With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving.
No nightly trance or breathed spell
Inspires the pale-eyed priest from the prophetic cell."

In Cowper's poem of "Yardley Oak" there are some beautiful mythological allusions. The former of the two following is to the fable of Castor and Pollux; the latter is more appropriate to our present subject. Addressing the acorn he says:

"Thou fell'st mature; and in the loamy clod,
 Swelling with vegetative force instinct,
 Didst burst thine egg, as theirs the fabled Twins
 Now stars; two lobes protruding, paired exact;
 A leaf succeeded and another leaf,
 And, all the elements thy puny growth
 Fostering propitious, thou becam'st a twig.
 Who lived when thou wast such? O, couldst thou speak,
 As in Dodona once thy kindred trees
 Oracular, I would not curious ask
 The future, best unknown, but at thy mouth
 Inquisitive, the less ambiguous past."

Tennyson, in his "Talking Oak," alludes to the oaks of Dodona in these lines:

"And I will work in prose and rhyme,
 And praise thee more in both
 Than bard has honored beech or lime,
 Or that Thessalian growth
 In which the swarthy ring-dove sat
 And mystic sentence spoke;" etc.

Byron alludes to the oracle of Delphi where, speaking of Rousseau, whose writings he conceives did much to bring on the French revolution, he says:

"For then he was inspired, and from him came,
 As from the Pythian's mystic cave of yore,
 Those oracles which set the world in flame,
 Nor ceased to burn till kingdoms were no more."

CHAPTER XXXV

ORIGIN OF MYTHOLOGY—STATUES OF GODS AND GODDESSES —POETS OF MYTHOLOGY

ORIGIN OF MYTHOLOGY

HAVING reached the close of our series of stories of Pagan mythology, an inquiry suggests itself. "Whence came these stories? Have they a foundation in truth, or are they simply dreams of the imagination?" Philosophers have suggested various theories on the sub-

ject; and 1. The Scriptural theory; according to which all mythological legends are derived from the narratives of Scripture, though the real facts have been disguised and altered. Thus Deucalion is only another name for Noah, Hercules for Samson, Arion for Jonah, etc. Sir Walter Raleigh, in his "History of the World," says, "Jubal, Tubal, and Tubal-Cain were Mercury, Vulcan, and Apollo, inventors of Pasturage, Smithing, and Music. The Dragon which kept the golden apples was the serpent that beguiled Eve. Nimrod's tower was the attempt of the Giants against Heaven." There are doubtless many curious coincidences like these, but the theory cannot without extravagance be pushed so far as to account for any great proportion of the stories.

2. The Historical theory; according to which all the persons mentioned in mythology were once real human beings, and the legends and fabulous traditions relating to them are merely the additions and embellishments of later times. Thus the story of Æolus, the king and god of the winds, is supposed to have risen from the fact that Æolus was the ruler of some islands in the Tyrrhenian Sea, where he reigned as a just and pious king, and taught the natives the use of sails for ships, and how to tell from the signs of the atmosphere the changes of the weather and the winds. Cadmus, who, the legend says, sowed the earth with dragon's teeth, from which sprang a crop of armed men, was in fact an emigrant from Phœnicia, and brought with him into Greece the knowledge of the letters of the alphabet, which he taught to the natives. From these rudiments of learning sprung civilization, which the poets have always been prone to describe as a deterioration of man's first estate, the Golden Age of innocence and simplicity.

3. The Allegorical theory supposes that all the myths of the ancients were allegorical and symbolical, and contained some moral, religious, or philosophical truth or historical fact, under the form of an allegory, but came in process of time to be understood literally. Thus Saturn, who devours his own children, is the same power whom the Greeks called Cronos (Time), which may truly be said to destroy whatever it has brought into

existence. The story of Io is interpreted in a similar manner. Io is the moon, and Argus the starry sky, which, as it were, keeps sleepless watch over her. The fabulous wanderings of Io represent the continual revolutions of the moon, which also suggested to Milton the same idea.

"To behold the wandering moon
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
In the heaven's wide, pathless way."

—*Il Penseroso.*

4. The Physical theory; according to which the elements of air, fire, and water were originally the objects of religious adoration, and the principal deities were personifications of the powers of nature. The transition was easy from a personification of the elements to the notion of supernatural beings presiding over and governing the different objects of nature. The Greeks, whose imagination was lively, peopled all nature with invisible beings, and supposed that every object, from the sun and sea to the smallest fountain and rivulet, was under the care of some particular divinity. Wordsworth, in his "Excursion," has beautifully developed this view of Grecian mythology:

"In that fair clime the lonely herdsman, stretched
On the soft grass through half a summer's day,
With music lulled his indolent repose;
And, in some fit of weariness, if he,
When his own breath was silent, chanced to hear
A distant strain far sweeter than the sounds
Which his poor skill could make, his fancy fetched
Even from the blazing chariot of the Sun
A beardless youth who touched a golden lute,
And filled the illumined groves with ravishment.
The mighty hunter, lifting up his eyes
Toward the crescent Moon, with grateful heart
Called on the lovely Wanderer who bestowed
That timely light to share his joyous sport;
And hence a beaming goddess with her nymphs
Across the lawn and through the darksome grove
(Not unaccompanied with tuneful notes
By echo multiplied from rock or cave)
Swept in the storm of chase, as moon and stars

Glance rapidly along the clouded heaven
When winds are blowing strong. The Traveller slaked
His thirst from rill or gushing fount, and thanked
The Naiad. Sunbeams upon distant hills
Gliding apace with shadows in their train,
Might with small help from fancy, be transformed
Into fleet Oreads sporting visibly.
The Zephyrs, fanning, as they passed, their wings,
Lacked not for love fair objects whom they wooed
With gentle whisper. Withered boughs grotesque,
Stripped of their leaves and twigs by hoary age,
From depth of shaggy covert peeping forth
In the low vale, or on steep mountain side;
And sometimes intermixed with stirring horns
Of the live deer, or goat's depending beard;
These were the lurking Satyrs, a wild brood
Of gamesome deities; or Pan himself,
That simple shepherd's awe-inspiring god."

All the theories which have been mentioned are true to a certain extent. It would therefore be more correct to say that the mythology of a nation has sprung from all these sources combined than from any one in particular. We may add also that there are many myths which have arisen from the desire of man to account for those natural phenomena which he cannot understand; and not a few have had their rise from a similar desire of giving a reason for the names of places and persons.

STATUES OF THE GODS

To adequately represent to the eye the ideas intended to be conveyed to the mind under the several names of deities was a task which called into exercise the highest powers of genius and art. Of the many attempts *four* have been most celebrated, the first two known to us only by the descriptions of the ancients, the others still extant and the acknowledged masterpieces of the sculptor's art.

THE OLYMPIAN JUPITER

The statue of the Olympian Jupiter by Phidias was considered the highest achievement of this department of Grecian art. It was of colossal dimensions, and was

what the ancients called "chryselephantine;" that is, composed of ivory and gold; the parts representing flesh being of ivory laid on a core of wood or stone, while the drapery and other ornaments were of gold. The height of the figure was forty feet, on a pedestal twelve feet high. The god was represented seated on his throne. His brows were crowned with a wreath of olive, and he held in his right hand a sceptre, and in his left a statue of Victory. The throne was of cedar, adorned with gold and precious stones.

The idea which the artist essayed to embody was that of the supreme deity of the Hellenic (Grecian) nation, enthroned as a conqueror, in perfect majesty and repose, and ruling with a nod the subject world. Phidias avowed that he took his idea from the representation which Homer gives in the first book of the "Iliad," in the passage thus translated by Pope:

"He spoke and awful bends his sable brows,
Shakes his ambrosial curls and gives the nod,
The stamp of fate and sanction of the god.
High heaven with reverence the dread signal took,
And all Olympus to the centre shook."¹

THE MINERVA OF THE PARTHENON

This was also the work of Phidias. It stood in the Parthenon, or temple of Minerva at Athens. The goddess was represented standing. In one hand she held a spear, in the other a statue of Victory. Her helmet, highly decorated, was surmounted by a Sphinx. The statue was forty feet in height, and, like the Jupiter, composed of ivory and gold. The eyes were of marble, and probably painted to represent the iris and pupil.

¹ Cowper's version is less elegant, but truer to the original:

"He ceased, and under his dark brows the nod
Vouchsafed of confirmation. All around
The sovereign's everlasting head his curls
Ambrosial shook, and the huge mountain reeled."

It may interest our readers to see how this passage appears in another famous version, that which was issued under the name of Tickell, contemporaneously with Pope's, and which, being by many attributed to Addison, led to the quarrel which ensued between Addison and Pope:

"This said, his kingly brow the sire inclined;
The large black curls fell awful from behind,
Thick shadowing the stern forehead of the god;
Olympus trembled at the almighty nod."

The Parthenon, in which this statue stood, was also constructed under the direction and superintendence of Phidias. Its exterior was enriched with sculptures, many of them from the hand of Phidias. The Elgin marbles, now in the British Museum, are a part of them.

Both the Jupiter and Minerva of Phidias are lost, but there is good ground to believe that we have, in several extant statues and busts, the artist's conceptions of the countenances of both. They are characterized by grave and dignified beauty, and freedom from any transient expression, which in the language of art is called *repose*.

THE VENUS DE' MEDICI

The Venus of the Medici is so called from its having been in the possession of the princes of that name in Rome when it first attracted attention, about two hundred years ago. An inscription on the base records it to be the work of Cleomenes, an Athenian sculptor of 200 B.C., but the authenticity of the inscription is doubtful. There is a story that the artist was employed by public authority to make a statue exhibiting the perfection of female beauty, and to aid him in his task the most perfect forms the city could supply were furnished him for models. It is this which Thomson alludes to in his "Summer":

"So stands the statue that enchants the world;
So bending tries to veil the matchless boast,
The mingled beauties of exulting Greece."

Byron also alludes to this statue. Speaking of the Florence Museum, he says:

"There, too, the goddess loves in stone, and fills
The air around with beauty;" etc.

And in the next stanza,

"Blood, pulse, and breast confirm the Dardan shepherd's prize."

See this last allusion explained in Chapter XXVII.

THE APOLLO BELVEDERE

The most highly esteemed of all the remains of ancient sculpture is the statue of Apollo, called the Belvedere, from the name of the apartment of the Pope's palace at Rome in which it was placed. The artist is unknown. It is supposed to be a work of Roman art, of about the first century of our era. It is a standing figure, in marble, more than seven feet high, naked except for the cloak which is fastened around the neck and hangs over the extended left arm. It is supposed to represent the god in the moment when he has shot the arrow to destroy the monster Python. (See Chapter III.) The victorious divinity is in the act of stepping forward. The left arm, which seems to have held the bow, is outstretched, and the head is turned in the same direction. In attitude and proportion the graceful majesty of the figure is unsurpassed. The effect is completed by the countenance, where on the perfection of youthful godlike beauty there dwells the consciousness of triumphant power.

THE DIANA A LA BICHE

The Diana of the Hind, in the palace of the Louvre, may be considered the counterpart to the Apollo Belvedere. The attitude much resembles that of the Apollo, the sizes correspond and also the style of execution. It is a work of the highest order, though by no means equal to the Apollo. The attitude is that of hurried and eager motion, the face that of a huntress in the excitement of the chase. The left hand is extended over the forehead of the Hind, which runs by her side, the right arm reaches backward over the shoulder to draw an arrow from the quiver.

THE POETS OF MYTHOLOGY

Homer, from whose poems of the "Iliad" and "Odyssey" we have taken the chief part of our chapters of the Trojan war and the return of the Grecians, is

almost as mythical a personage as the heroes he celebrates. The traditionary story is that he was a wandering minstrel, blind and old, who travelled from place to place singing his lays to the music of his harp, in the courts of princes or the cottages of peasants, and dependent upon the voluntary offerings of his hearers for support. Byron calls him "The blind old man of Scio's rocky isle," and a well-known epigram, alluding to the uncertainty of the fact of his birthplace, says:

"Seven wealthy towns contend for Homer dead,
Through which the living Homer begged his bread."

These seven were Smyrna, Scio, Rhodes, Colophon, Salamis, Argos, and Athens.

Modern scholars have doubted whether the Homeric poems are the work of any single mind. This arises from the difficulty of believing that poems of such length could have been committed to writing at so early an age as that usually assigned to these, an age earlier than the date of any remaining inscriptions or coins, and when no materials capable of containing such long productions were yet introduced into use. On the other hand it is asked how poems of such length could have been handed down from age to age by means of the memory alone. This is answered by the statement that there was a professional body of men, called Rhapsodists, who recited the poems of others, and whose business it was to commit to memory and rehearse for pay the national and patriotic legends.

The prevailing opinion of the learned, at this time, seems to be that the framework and much of the structure of the poems belong to Homer, but that there are numerous interpolations and additions by other hands.

The date assigned to Homer, on the authority of Herodotus, is 850 B.C.

VIRGIL

Virgil, called also by his surname, Maro, from whose poem of the "*Æneid*" we have taken the story of *Æneas*, was one of the great poets who made the reign of the

Roman emperor Augustus so celebrated, under the name of the Augustan age. Virgil was born in Mantua in the year 70 B.C. His great poem is ranked next to those of Homer, in the highest class of poetical composition, the Epic. Virgil is far inferior to Homer in originality and invention, but superior to him in correctness and elegance. To critics of English lineage Milton alone of modern poets seems worthy to be classed with these illustrious ancients. His poem of "Paradise Lost," from which we have borrowed so many illustrations, is in many respects equal, in some superior, to either of the great works of antiquity. The following epigram of Dryden characterizes the three poets with as much truth as it is usual to find in such pointed criticism:

"ON MILTON

"Three poets in three different ages born,
Greece, Italy, and England did adorn.
The first in loftiness of soul surpassed,
The next in majesty, in both the last.
The force of nature could no further go;
To make a third she joined the other two."

From Cowper's "Table Talk":

"Ages elapsed ere Homer's lamp appeared,
And ages ere the Mantuan swan was heard.
To carry nature lengths unknown before,
To give a Milton birth, asked ages more.
Thus genius rose and set at ordered times,
And shot a dayspring into distant climes,
Ennobling every region that he chose;
He sunk in Greece, in Italy he rose,
And, tedious years of Gothic darkness past,
Emerg'd all splendor in our isle at last.
Thus lovely Halcyons dive into the main,
Then show far off their shining plumes again."

OVID,

often alluded to in poetry by his other name of Naso, was born in the year 43 B.C. He was educated for public life and held some offices of considerable dignity, but poetry was his delight, and he early resolved to devote himself to it. He accordingly sought the society

of the contemporary poets, and was acquainted with Horace and saw Virgil, though the latter died when Ovid was yet too young and undistinguished to have formed his acquaintance. Ovid spent an easy life at Rome in the enjoyment of a competent income. He was intimate with the family of Augustus, the emperor, and it is supposed that some serious offence given to some member of that family was the cause of an event which reversed the poet's happy circumstances and clouded all the latter portion of his life. At the age of fifty he was banished from Rome, and ordered to betake himself to Tomi, on the borders of the Black Sea. Here, among the barbarous people and in a severe climate, the poet, who had been accustomed to all the pleasures of a luxurious capital and the society of his most distinguished contemporaries, spent the last ten years of his life, worn out with grief and anxiety. His only consolation in exile was to address his wife and absent friends, and his letters were all poetical. Though these poems (the "Trista" and "Letters from Pontus") have no other topic than the poet's sorrows, his exquisite taste and fruitful invention have redeemed them from the charge of being tedious, and they are read with pleasure and even with sympathy.

The two great works of Ovid are his "Metamorphoses" and his "Fasti." They are both mythological poems, and from the former we have taken most of our stories of Grecian and Roman mythology. A late writer thus characterizes these poems:

"The rich mythology of Greece furnished Ovid, as it may still furnish the poet, the painter, and the sculptor, with materials for his art. With exquisite taste, simplicity, and pathos he has narrated the fabulous traditions of early ages, and given to them that appearance of reality which only a master hand could impart. His pictures of nature are striking and true; he selects with care that which is appropriate; he rejects the superfluous; and when he has completed his work, it is neither defective nor redundant. The 'Metamorphoses' are read with pleasure by youth, and are re-read in more advanced age with still greater delight. The poet ventured

to predict that his poem would survive him, and be read wherever the Roman name was known."

The prediction above alluded to is contained in the closing lines of the "Metamorphoses," of which we give a literal translation below:

"And now I close my work, which not the ire
Of Jove, nor tooth of time, nor sword, nor fire
Shall bring to nought. Come when it will that day
Which o'er the body, not the mind, has sway,
And snatch the remnant of my life away,
My better part above the stars shall soar,
And my renown endure forevermore.
Where'er the Roman arms and arts shall spread,
There by the people shall my book be read;
And, if aught true in poet's visions be,
My name and fame have immortality."

CHAPTER XXXVI

MODERN MONSTERS—THE PHŒNIX—BASILISK—UNICORN —SALAMANDER

MODERN MONSTERS

THERE is a set of imaginary beings which seem to have been the successors of the "Gorgons, Hydras, and Chimeras dire" of the old superstitions, and, having no connection with the false gods of Paganism, to have continued to enjoy an existence in the popular belief after Paganism was superseded by Christianity. They are mentioned perhaps by the classical writers, but their chief popularity and currency seem to have been in more modern times. We seek our accounts of them not so much in the poetry of the ancients as in the old natural history books and narrations of travellers. The accounts which we are about to give are taken chiefly from the Penny Cyclopaedia.

THE PHŒNIX

Ovid tells the story of the Phœnix as follows: "Most beings spring from other individuals; but there is a certain kind which reproduces itself. The Assyrians

call it the Phoenix. It does not live on fruit or flowers, but on frankincense and odoriferous gums. When it has lived five hundred years, it builds itself a nest in the branches of an oak, or on the top of a palm tree. In this it collects cinnamon, and spikenard, and myrrh, and of these materials builds a pile on which it deposits itself, and dying, breathes out its last breath amidst odors. From the body of the parent bird, a young Phoenix issues forth, destined to live as long a life as its predecessor. When this has grown up and gained sufficient strength, it lifts its nest from the tree (its own cradle and its parent's sepulchre), and carries it to the city of Heliopolis in Egypt, and deposits it in the temple of the Sun."

Such is the account given by a poet. Now let us see that of a philosophic historian. Tacitus says, "In the consulship of Paulus Fabius (A.D. 34) the miraculous bird known to the world by the name of the Phoenix, after disappearing for a series of ages, revisited Egypt. It was attended in its flight by a group of various birds, all attracted by the novelty, and gazing with wonder at so beautiful an appearance." He then gives an account of the bird, not varying materially from the preceding, but adding some details. "The first care of the young bird as soon as fledged, and able to trust to his wings, is to perform the obsequies of his father. But this duty is not undertaken rashly. He collects a quantity of myrrh, and to try his strength makes frequent excursions with a load on his back. When he has gained sufficient confidence in his own vigor, he takes up the body of his father and flies with it to the altar of the Sun, where he leaves it to be consumed in flames of fragrance." Other writers add a few particulars. The myrrh is compacted in the form of an egg, in which the dead Phoenix is enclosed. From the mouldering flesh of the dead bird a worm springs, and this worm, when grown large, is transformed into a bird. Herodotus *describes* the bird, though he says, "I have not seen it myself, except in a picture. Part of his plumage is gold-colored, and part crimson; and he is for the most part very much like an eagle in outline and bulk."

The first writer who disclaimed a belief in the existence of the Phoenix was Sir Thomas Browne, in his "Vulgar Errors," published in 1646. He was replied to a few years later by Alexander Ross, who says, in answer to the objection of the Phoenix so seldom making his appearance, "His instinct teaches him to keep out of the way of the tyrant of the creation, *man*, for if he were to be got at, some wealthy glutton would surely devour him, though there were no more in the world."

Dryden in one of his early poems has this allusion to the Phoenix:

"So when the new-born Phoenix first is seen,
Her feathered subjects all adore their queen,
And while she makes her progress through the East,
From every grove her numerous train's increased;
Each poet of the air her glory sings,
And round him the pleased audience clap their wings."

Milton, in "Paradise Lost," Book V., compares the angel Raphael descending to earth to a Phoenix:

"... Down thither, prone in flight
He speeds, and through the vast ethereal sky
Sails between worlds and worlds, with steady wing,
Now on the polar winds, then with quick fan
Winnows the buxom air; till within soar
Of towering eagles, to all the fowls he seems
A Phoenix, gazed by all; as that sole bird
When, to enshrine his relics in the sun's
Bright temple, to Egyptian Thebes he flies."

THE COCKATRICE, OR BASILISK

This animal was called the king of the serpents. In confirmation of his royalty, he was said to be endowed with a crest, or comb upon the head, constituting a crown. He was supposed to be produced from the egg of a cock hatched under toads or serpents. There were several species of this animal. One species burned up whatever they approached; a second were a kind of wandering Medusa's heads, and their look caused an instant horror which was immediately followed by death. In Shakspeare's play of "Richard the Third," Lady

Anne, in answer to Richard's compliment on her eyes, says, "Would they were basilisk's, to strike thee dead!"

The basilisks were called kings of serpents because all other serpents and snakes, behaving like good subjects, and wisely not wishing to be burned up or struck dead, fled the moment they heard the distant hiss of their king, although they might be in full feed upon the most delicious prey, leaving the sole enjoyment of the banquet to the royal monster.

The Roman naturalist Pliny thus describes him: "He does not impel his body, like other serpents, by a multiplied flexion, but advances lofty and upright. He kills the shrubs, not only by contact, but by breathing on them, and splits the rocks, such power of evil is there in him." It was formerly believed that if killed by a spear from on horseback the power of the poison conducted through the weapon killed not only the rider, but the horse also. To this Lucan alludes in these lines:

"What though the Moor the basilisk hath slain,
And pinned him lifeless to the sandy plain,
Up through the spear the subtle venom flies,
The hand imbibes it, and the victor dies."

Such a prodigy was not likely to be passed over in the legends of the saints. Accordingly we find it recorded that a certain holy man, going to a fountain in the desert, suddenly beheld a basilisk. He immediately raised his eyes to heaven, and with a pious appeal to the Deity laid the monster dead at his feet.

These wonderful powers of the basilisk are attested by a host of learned persons, such as Galen, Avicenna, Scaliger, and others. Occasionally one would demur to some part of the tale while he admitted the rest. Jonston, a learned physician, sagely remarks, "I would scarcely believe that it kills with its look, for who could have seen it and lived to tell the story?" The worthy sage was not aware that those who went to hunt the basilisk of this sort took with them a mirror, which reflected back the deadly glare upon its author, and by a

kind of poetical justice slew the basilisk with his own weapon.

But what was to attack this terrible and unapproachable monster? There is an old saying that "everything has its enemy"—and the cockatrice quailed before the weasel. The basilisk might look daggers, the weasel cared not, but advanced boldly to the conflict. When bitten, the weasel retired for a moment to eat some rue, which was the only plant the basilisks could not wither, returned with renewed strength and soundness to the charge, and never left the enemy till he was stretched dead on the plain. The monster, too, as if conscious of the irregular way in which he came into the world, was supposed to have a **great** antipathy to a cock; and well he might, for as soon as he heard the cock crow he expired.

The basilisk was of some use after death. Thus we read that its carcass was suspended in the temple of Apollo, and in private houses, as a sovereign remedy against spiders, and that it was also hung up in the temple of Diana, for which reason no swallow ever dared enter the sacred place.

The reader will, we apprehend, by this time have had enough of absurdities, but still we can imagine his anxiety to know what a cockatrice was like. The following is from Aldrovandus, a celebrated naturalist of the sixteenth century, whose work on natural history, in thirteen folio volumes, contains with much that is valuable a large proportion of fables and inutilities. In particular he is so ample on the subject of the cock and the bull that from his practice, all rambling, gossiping tales of doubtful credibility are called *cock and bull stories*. Aldrovandus, however, deserves our respect and esteem as the founder of a botanic garden, and as a pioneer in the now prevalent custom of making scientific collections for purposes of investigation and research.

Shelley, in his "Ode to Naples," full of the enthusiasm excited by the intelligence of the proclamation of a Constitutional Government at Naples, in 1820, thus uses an allusion to the basilisk:

"What though Cimmerian anarchs dare blaspheme
Freedom and thee? a new Actæon's error
Shall theirs have been,—devoured by their own hounds!
Be thou like the imperial basilisk,
Killing thy foe with unapparent wounds!
Gaze on oppression, till at that dread risk,
Aghast she pass from the earth's disk.
Fear not, but gaze,—for freemen mightier grow,
And slaves more feeble, gazing on their foe."

THE UNICORN

Pliny, the Roman naturalist, out of whose account of the unicorn most of the modern unicorns have been described and figured, records it as "a very ferocious beast, similar in the rest of its body to a horse, with the head of a deer, the feet of an elephant, the tail of a boar, a deep, bellowing voice, and a single black horn, two cubits in length, standing out in the middle of its forehead." He adds that "it cannot be taken alive;" and some such excuse may have been necessary in those days for not producing the living animal upon the arena of the amphitheatre.

The unicorn seems to have been a sad puzzle to the hunters, who hardly knew how to come at so valuable a piece of game. Some described the horn as movable at the will of the animal, a kind of small sword, in short, with which no hunter who was not exceedingly cunning in fence could have a chance. Others maintained that all the animal's strength lay in its horn, and that when hard pressed in pursuit, it would throw itself from the pinnacle of the highest rocks horn foremost, so as to pitch upon it, and then quietly march off not a whit the worse for its fall.

But it seems they found out how to circumvent the poor unicorn at last. They discovered that it was a great lover of purity and innocence, so they took the field with a young *virgin*, who was placed in the unsuspecting admirer's way. When the unicorn spied her, he approached with all reverence, couched beside her, and laying his head in her lap, fell asleep. The treacherous virgin then gave a signal, and the hunters made in and captured the simple beast.

Modern zoölogists, disgusted as they well may be with such fables as these, disbelieve generally the existence of the unicorn. Yet there are animals bearing on their heads a bony protuberance more or less like a horn, which may have given rise to the story. The rhinoceros horn, as it is called, is such a protuberance, though it does not exceed a few inches in height, and is far from agreeing with the descriptions of the horn of the unicorn. The nearest approach to a horn in the middle of the forehead is exhibited in the bony protuberance on the forehead of the giraffe; but this also is short and blunt, and is not the only horn of the animal, but a third horn, standing in front of the two others. In fine, though it would be presumptuous to deny the existence of a one-horned quadruped other than the rhinoceros, it may be safely stated that the insertion of a long and solid horn in the living forehead of a horse-like or deer-like animal is as near an impossibility as anything can be.

THE SALAMANDER

The following is from the "Life of Benvenuto Cellini," an Italian artist of the sixteenth century, written by himself: "When I was about five years of age, my father, happening to be in a little room in which they had been washing, and where there was a good fire of oak burning, looked into the flames and saw a little animal resembling a lizard, which could live in the hottest part of that element. Instantly perceiving what it was, he called for my sister and me, and after he had shown us the creature, he gave me a box on the ear. I fell a-crying, while he, soothing me with caresses, spoke these words: 'My dear child, I do not give you that blow for any fault you have committed, but that you may recollect that the little creature you see in the fire is a salamander; such a one as never was beheld before to my knowledge.' So saying he embraced me, and gave me some money."

It seems unreasonable to doubt a story of which Signor Cellini was both an eye and ear witness. Add

to which the authority of numerous sage philosophers, at the head of whom are Aristotle and Pliny, affirms this power of the salamander. According to them, the animal not only resists fire, but extinguishes it, and when he sees the flame charges it as an enemy which he well knows how to vanquish.

That the skin of an animal which could resist the action of fire should be considered proof against that element is not to be wondered at. We accordingly find that a cloth made of the skin of salamanders (for there really is such an animal, a kind of lizard) was incombustible, and very valuable for wrapping up such articles as were too precious to be intrusted to any other envelopes. These fire-proof cloths were actually produced, said to be made of salamander's wool, though the knowing ones detected that the substance of which they were composed was asbestos, a mineral, which is in fine filaments capable of being woven into a flexible cloth.

The foundation of the above fables is supposed to be the fact that the salamander really does secrete from the pores of his body a milky juice, which when he is irritated is produced in considerable quantity, and would doubtless, for a few moments, defend the body from fire. Then it is a hibernating animal, and in winter retires to some hollow tree or other cavity, where it coils itself up and remains in a torpid state till the spring again calls it forth. It may therefore sometimes be carried with the fuel to the fire, and wake up only time enough to put forth all its faculties for its defence. Its viscous juice would do good service, and all who profess to have seen it, acknowledge that it got out of the fire as fast as its legs could carry it; indeed, too fast for them ever to make prize of one, except in one instance, and in that one the animal's feet and some parts of its body were badly burned.

Dr. Young, in the "Night Thoughts," with more quaintness than good taste, compares the sceptic who can remain unmoved in the contemplation of the starry heavens to a salamander unwarmed in the fire:

"An undevout astronomer is mad!

"O, what a genius must inform the skies!
And is Lorenzo's salamander-heart
Cold and untouched amid these sacred fires?"

CHAPTER XXXVII

EASTERN MYTHOLOGY—ZOROASTER—HINDU MYTHOLOGY
—CASTES—BUDDHA—GRAND LAMA

ZOROASTER

OUR knowledge of the religion of the ancient Persians is principally derived from the Zendavesta, or sacred books of that people. Zoroaster was the founder of their religion, or rather the reformer of the religion which preceded him. The time when he lived is doubtful, but it is certain that his system became the dominant religion of Western Asia from the time of Cyrus (550 B.C.) to the conquest of Persia by Alexander the Great. Under the Macedonian monarchy the doctrines of Zoroaster appear to have been considerably corrupted by the introduction of foreign opinions, but they afterwards recovered their ascendancy.

Zoroaster taught the existence of a supreme being, who created two other mighty beings and imparted to them as much of his own nature as seemed good to him. Of these, Ormuzd (called by the Greeks Oromasdes) remained faithful to his creator, and was regarded as the source of all good, while Ahriman (Arimanes) rebelled, and became the author of all evil upon the earth. Ormuzd created man and supplied him with all the materials of happiness; but Ahriman marred this happiness by introducing evil into the world, and creating savage beasts and poisonous reptiles and plants. In consequence of this, evil and good are now mingled together in every part of the world, and the followers of good and evil—the adherents of Ormuzd and Ahriman—carry on incessant war. But this state of things will not

last forever. The time will come when the adherents of Ormuzd shall everywhere be victorious, and Ahriman and his followers be consigned to darkness forever.

The religious rites of the ancient Persians were exceedingly simple. They used neither temples, altars, nor statues, and performed their sacrifices on the tops of mountains. They adored fire, light, and the sun as emblems of Ormuzd, the source of all light and purity, but did not regard them as independent deities. The religious rites and ceremonies were regulated by the priests, who were called Magi. The learning of the Magi was connected with astrology and enchantment, in which they were so celebrated that their name was applied to all orders of magicians and enchanters.

Wordsworth thus alludes to the worship of the Persians:

"... the Persian,—zealous to reject
Altar and Image, and the inclusive walls
And roofs of temples built by human hands,—
The loftiest heights ascending, from their tops,
With myrtle-wreathed Tiara on his brows,
Presented sacrifice to Moon and Stars,
And to the Winds and mother Elements,
And the whole circle of the Heavens, for him
A sensitive existence and a God."

—*Excursion*, Book IV.

In "Childe Harold" Byron speaks thus of the Persian worship:

"Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places and the peak
Of earth-o'er-gazing mountains, and thus take
A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honor shrines are weak,
Upreared of human hands. Come and compare
Columns and idol-dwellings, Goth or Greek,
With Nature's realms of worship, earth and air,
Nor fix on fond abodes to circumscribe thy prayer."
III., 91.

The religion of Zoroaster continued to flourish even after the introduction of Christianity, and in the third century was the dominant faith of the East, till the rise of the Mahometan power and the conquest of Persia by

the Arabs in the seventh century, who compelled the greater number of the Persians to renounce their ancient faith. Those who refused to abandon the religion of their ancestors fled to the deserts of Kerman and to Hindustan, where they still exist under the name of Parsees, a name derived from Pars, the ancient name of Persia. The Arabs call them Guebers, from an Arabic word signifying unbelievers. At Bombay the Parsees are at this day a very active, intelligent, and wealthy class. For purity of life, honesty, and conciliatory manners, they are favorably distinguished. They have numerous temples to Fire, which they adore as the symbol of the divinity.

The Persian religion makes the subject of the finest tale in Moore's "Lalla Rookh," the "Fire Worshippers." The Gueber chief says,

"Yes! I am of that impious race,
Those slaves of Fire, that morn and even
Hail their creator's dwelling-place
Among the living lights of heaven;
Yes! I am of that outcast crew
To Iran and to vengeance true,
Who curse the hour your Arabs came
To desecrate our shrines of flame,
And swear before God's burning eye,
To break our country's chains or die."

HINDU MYTHOLOGY

The religion of the Hindus is professedly founded on the Vedas. To these books of their scripture they attach the greatest sanctity, and state that Brahma himself composed them at the creation. But the present arrangement of the Vedas is attributed to the sage Vyasa, about five thousand years ago.

The Vedas undoubtedly teach the belief of one supreme God. The name of this deity is Brahma. His attributes are represented by the three personified powers of *creation*, *preservation*, and *destruction*, which under the respective names of Brahma, Vishnu, and Siva form the *Trimurti* or triad of principal Hindu gods. Of the inferior gods the most important are: 1. Indra, the god

of heaven, of thunder, lightning, storm, and rain; 2. Agni, the god of fire; 3. Yama, the god of the infernal regions; 4. Surya, the god of the sun.

Brahma is the creator of the universe, and the source from which all the individual deities have sprung, and into which all will ultimately be absorbed. "As milk changes to curd, and water to ice, so is Brahma variously transformed and diversified, without aid of exterior means of any sort." The human soul, according to the Vedas, is a portion of the supreme ruler, as a spark is of the fire.

VISHNU

Vishnu occupies the second place in the triad of the Hindus, and is the personification of the preserving principle. To protect the world in various epochs of danger, Vishnu descended to the earth in different incarnations, or bodily forms, which descents are called Avatars. They are very numerous, but ten are more particularly specified. The first Avatar was as Matsya, the Fish, under which form Vishnu preserved Manu, the ancestor of the human race, during a universal deluge. The second Avatar was in the form of a Tortoise, which form he assumed to support the earth when the gods were churning the sea for the beverage of immortality, Amrita.

We may omit the other Avatars, which were of the same general character, that is, interpositions to protect the right or to punish wrong-doers, and come to the ninth, which is the most celebrated of the Avatars of Vishnu, in which he appeared in the human form of Krishna, an invincible warrior, who by his exploits relieved the earth from the tyrants who oppressed it.

Buddha is by the followers of the Brahmanical religion regarded as a delusive incarnation of Vishnu, assumed by him in order to induce the Asuras, opponents of the gods, to abandon the sacred ordinances of the Vedas, by which means they lost their strength and supremacy.

Kalki is the name of the *tenth* Avatar, in which Vishnu will appear at the end of the present age of the

world to destroy all vice and wickedness, and to restore mankind to virtue and purity.

SIVA

Siva is the third person of the Hindu triad. He is the personification of the destroying principle. Though the third name, he is, in respect to the number of his worshippers and the extension of his worship, before either of the others. In the Puranas (the scriptures of the modern Hindu religion) no allusion is made to the original power of this god as a destroyer; that power not being to be called into exercise till after the expiration of twelve millions of years, or when the universe will come to an end; and Mahadeva (another name for Siva) is rather the representative of regeneration than of destruction.

The worshippers of Vishnu and Siva form two sects, each of which proclaims the superiority of its favorite deity, denying the claims of the other, and Brahma, the creator, having finished his work, seems to be regarded as no longer active, and has now only one temple in India, while Mahadeva and Vishnu have many. The worshippers of Vishnu are generally distinguished by a greater tenderness for life, and consequent abstinence from animal food, and a worship less cruel than that of the followers of Siva.

JUGGERNAUT

Whether the worshippers of Juggernaut are to be reckoned among the followers of Vishnu or Siva, our authorities differ. The temple stands near the shore, about three hundred miles south-west of Calcutta. The idol is a carved block of wood, with a hideous face, painted black, and a distended blood-red mouth. On festival days the throne of the image is placed on a tower sixty feet high, moving on wheels. Six long ropes are attached to the tower, by which the people draw it along. The priests and their attendants stand round the

throne on the tower, and occasionally turn to the worshippers with songs and gestures. While the tower moves along numbers of the devout worshippers throw themselves on the ground, in order to be crushed by the wheels, and the multitude shout in approbation of the act, as a pleasing sacrifice to the idol. Every year, particularly at two great festivals in March and July, pilgrims flock in crowds to the temple. Not less than seventy or eighty thousand people are said to visit the place on these occasions, when all castes eat together.

CASTES

The division of the Hindus into classes or castes, with fixed occupations, existed from the earliest times. It is supposed by some to have been founded upon conquest, the first three castes being composed of a foreign race, who subdued the natives of the country and reduced them to an inferior caste. Others trace it to the fondness of perpetuating, by descent from father to son, certain offices or occupations.

The Hindu tradition gives the following account of the origin of the various castes: At the creation Brahma resolved to give the earth inhabitants who should be direct emanations from his own body. Accordingly from his mouth came forth the eldest born, Brahma (the priest), to whom he confided the four Vedas; from his right arm issued Shatriya (the warrior), and from his left, the warrior's wife. His thighs produced Vaissyas, male and female (agriculturists and traders), and lastly from his feet sprang Sudras (mechanics and laborers).

The four sons of Brahma, so significantly brought into the world, became the fathers of the human race, and heads of their respective castes. They were commanded to regard the four Vedas as containing all the rules of their faith, and all that was necessary to guide them in their religious ceremonies. They were also commanded to take rank in the order of their birth, the Brahmans uppermost, as having sprung from the head of Brahma.

A strong line of demarcation is drawn between the first three castes and the Sudras. The former are allowed to receive instruction from the Vedas, which is not permitted to the Sudras. The Brahmans possess the privilege of teaching the Vedas, and were in former times in exclusive possession of all knowledge. Though the sovereign of the country was chosen from the Shatriya class, also called Rajputs, the Brahmans possessed the real power, and were the royal counsellors, the judges and magistrates of the country; their persons and property were inviolable; and though they committed the greatest crimes, they could only be banished from the kingdom. They were to be treated by sovereigns with the greatest respect, for "a Brahman, whether learned or ignorant, is a powerful divinity."

When the Brahman arrives at years of maturity it becomes his duty to marry. He ought to be supported by the contributions of the rich, and not to be obliged to gain his subsistence by any laborious or productive occupation. But as all the Brahmans could not be maintained by the working classes of the community, it was found necessary to allow them to engage in productive employments.

We need say little of the two intermediate classes, whose rank and privileges may be readily inferred from their occupations. The Sudras or fourth class are bound to servile attendance on the higher classes, especially the Brahmans, but they may follow mechanical occupations and practical arts, as painting and writing, or become traders or husbandmen. Consequently they sometimes grow rich, and it will also sometimes happen that Brahmans become poor. That fact works its usual consequence, and rich Sudras sometimes employ poor Brahmans in menial occupations.

There is another class lower even than the Sudras, for it is not one of the original pure classes, but springs from an unauthorized union of individuals of different castes. These are the Pariahs, who are employed in the lowest services and treated with the utmost severity. They are compelled to do what no one else can do without pollution. They are not only considered unclean

themselves, but they render unclean everything they touch. They are deprived of all civil rights, and stigmatized by particular laws regulating their mode of life, their houses, and their furniture. They are not allowed to visit the pagodas or temples of the other castes, but have their own pagodas and religious exercises. They are not suffered to enter the houses of the other castes; if it is done incautiously or from necessity, the place must be purified by religious ceremonies. They must not appear at public markets, and are confined to the use of particular wells, which they are obliged to surround with bones of animals, to warn others against using them. They dwell in miserable hovels, distant from cities and villages, and are under no restrictions in regard to food, which last is not a privilege, but a mark of ignominy, as if they were so degraded that nothing could pollute them. The three higher castes are prohibited entirely the use of flesh. The fourth is allowed to use all kinds except beef, but only the lowest caste is allowed every kind of food without restriction.

· BUDDHA

Buddha, whom the Vedas represent as a delusive incarnation of Vishnu, is said by his followers to have been a mortal sage, whose name was Gautama, called also by the complimentary epithets of Sakyasinha, the Lion, and Buddha, the Sage.

By a comparison of the various epochs assigned to his birth, it is inferred that he lived about one thousand years before Christ.

He was the son of a king; and when in conformity to the usage of the country he was, a few days after his birth, presented before the altar of a deity, the image is said to have inclined its head as a presage of the future greatness of the new-born prophet. The child soon developed faculties of the first order, and became equally distinguished by the uncommon beauty of his person. No sooner had he grown to years of maturity than he began to reflect deeply on the depravity and misery of mankind, and he conceived the idea of retiring

from society and devoting himself to meditation. His father in vain opposed this design. Buddha escaped the vigilance of his guards, and having found a secure retreat, lived for six years undisturbed in his devout contemplations. At the expiration of that period he came forward at Benares as a religious teacher. At first some who heard him doubted of the soundness of his mind; but his doctrines soon gained credit, and were propagated so rapidly that Buddha himself lived to see them spread all over India. He died at the age of eighty years.

The Buddhists reject entirely the authority of the Vedas, and the religious observances prescribed in them and kept by the Hindus. They also reject the distinction of castes, and prohibit all bloody sacrifices, and allow animal food. Their priests are chosen from all classes; they are expected to procure their maintenance by perambulation and begging, and among other things it is their duty to endeavor to turn to some use things thrown aside as useless by others, and to discover the medicinal power of plants. But in Ceylon three orders of priests are recognized; those of the highest order are usually men of high birth and learning, and are supported at the principal temples, most of which have been richly endowed by the former monarchs of the country.

For several centuries after the appearance of Buddha, his sect seems to have been tolerated by the Brahmans, and Buddhism appears to have penetrated the peninsula of Hindustan in every direction, and to have been carried to Ceylon, and to the eastern peninsula. But afterwards it had to endure in India a long-continued persecution, which ultimately had the effect of entirely abolishing it in the country where it had originated, but to scatter it widely over adjacent countries. Buddhism appears to have been introduced into China about the year 65 of our era. From China it was subsequently extended to Corea, Japan, and Java.

THE GRAND LAMA

It is a doctrine alike of the Brahminical Hindus and of the Buddhist sect that the confinement of the human soul, an emanation of the divine spirit, in a human body, is a state of misery, and the consequence of frailties and sins committed during former existences. But they hold that some few individuals have appeared on this earth from time to time, not under the necessity of terrestrial existence, but who voluntarily descended to the earth to promote the welfare of mankind. These individuals have gradually assumed the character of reappearances of Buddha himself, in which capacity the line is continued till the present day, in the several Lamas of Thibet, China, and other countries where Buddhism prevails. In consequence of the victories of Gengis Khan and his successors, the Lama residing in Thibet was raised to the dignity of chief pontiff of the sect. A separate province was assigned to him as his own territory, and besides his spiritual dignity he became to a limited extent a temporal monarch. He is styled the Dalai Lama.

The first Christian missionaries who proceeded to Thibet were surprised to find there in the heart of Asia a pontifical court and several other ecclesiastical institutions resembling those of the Roman Catholic church. They found convents for priests and nuns; also processions and forms of religious worship, attended with much pomp and splendor; and many were induced by these similarities to consider Lamaism as a sort of degenerated Christianity. It is not improbable that the Lamas derived some of these practices from the Nestorian Christians, who were settled in Tartary when Buddhism was introduced into Thibet.

PRESTER JOHN

An early account, communicated probably by travelling merchants, of a Lama or spiritual chief among the Tartars, seems to have occasioned in Europe the report of a Presbyter or Prester John, a Christian pontiff

resident in Upper Asia. The Pope sent a mission in search of him, as did also Louis IX. of France, some years later, but both missions were unsuccessful, though the small communities of Nestorian Christians, which they did find, served to keep up the belief in Europe that such a personage did exist somewhere in the East. At last in the fifteenth century, a Portuguese traveller, Pedro Covilham, happening to hear that there was a Christian prince in the country of the Abessines (Abysinia), not far from the Red Sea, concluded that this must be the true Prester John. He accordingly went thither, and penetrated to the court of the king, whom he calls Negus. Milton alludes to him in "Paradise Lost," Book XI., where, describing Adam's vision of his descendants in their various nations and cities, scattered over the face of the earth, he says,—

"... Nor did his eyes not ken
Th' empire of Negus, to his utmost port,
Ercoco, and the less maritime kings,
Mombaza and Quiloa and Melind."

CHAPTER XXXVIII

NORTHERN MYTHOLOGY—VALHALLA—THE VALKYRIOR

NORTHERN MYTHOLOGY

THE stories which have engaged our attention thus far relate to the mythology of southern regions. But there is another branch of ancient superstitions which ought not to be entirely overlooked, especially as it belongs to the nations from which we, through our English ancestors, derive our origin. It is that of the northern nations, called Scandinavians, who inhabited the countries now known as Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and Iceland. These mythological records are con-

tained in two collections called the Eddas, of which the oldest is in poetry and dates back to the year 1056, the more modern or prose Edda being of the date of 1640.

According to the Eddas there was once no heaven above nor earth beneath, but only a bottomless deep, and a world of mist in which flowed a fountain. Twelve rivers issued from this fountain, and when they had flowed far from their source, they froze into ice, and one layer accumulating over another, the great deep was filled up.

Southward from the world of mist was the world of light. From this flowed a warm wind upon the ice and melted it. The vapors rose in the air and formed clouds, from which sprang Ymir, the Frost giant and his progeny, and the cow Audhumbla, whose milk afforded nourishment and food to the giant. The cow got nourishment by licking the hoar frost and salt from the ice. While she was one day licking the salt stones there appeared at first the hair of a man, on the second day the whole head, and on the third the entire form endowed with beauty, agility, and power. This new being was a god, from whom and his wife, a daughter of the giant race, sprang the three brothers Odin, Vili, and Ve. They slew the giant Ymir, and out of his body formed the earth, of his blood the seas, of his bones the mountains, of his hair the trees, of his skull the heavens, and of his brain clouds, charged with hail and snow. Of Ymir's eyebrows the gods formed Midgard (mid earth), destined to become the abode of man.

Odin then regulated the periods of day and night and the seasons by placing in the heavens the sun and moon, and appointing to them their respective courses. As soon as the sun began to shed its rays upon the earth, it caused the vegetable world to bud and sprout. Shortly after the gods had created the world they walked by the side of the sea, pleased with their new work, but found that it was still incomplete, for it was without human beings. They therefore took an ash tree and made a man out of it, and they made a woman out of an elder, and called the man Aske and the woman Embla. Odin then gave them life and soul, Vili reason

and motion, and Ve bestowed upon them the senses, expressive features, and speech. Midgard was then given them as their residence, and they became the progenitors of the human race.

The mighty ash tree Ygdrasill was supposed to support the whole universe. It sprang from the body of Ymir, and had three immense roots, extending one into Asgard (the dwelling of the gods), the other into Jotunheim (the abode of the giants), and the third to Niffleheim (the regions of darkness and cold). By the side of each of these roots is a spring, from which it is watered. The root that extends into Asgard is carefully tended by the three Norns, goddesses, who are regarded as the dispensers of fate. They are Urdur (the past), Verdandi (the present), Skuld (the future). The spring at the Jotunheim side is Ymir's well, in which wisdom and wit lie hidden, but that of Niffleheim feeds the adder Nidhogge (darkness), which perpetually gnaws at the root. Four harts run across the branches of the tree and bite the buds; they represent the four winds. Under the tree lies Ymir, and when he tries to shake off its weight the earth quakes.

Asgard is the name of the abode of the gods, access to which is only gained by crossing the bridge Bifrost (the rainbow). Asgard consists of golden and silver palaces, the dwellings of the gods, but the most beautiful of these is Valhalla, the residence of Odin. When seated on his throne he overlooks all heaven and earth. Upon his shoulders are the ravens Hugin and Munin, who fly every day over the whole world, and on their return report to him all they have seen and heard. At his feet lie his two wolves, Geri and Freki, to whom Odin gives all the meat that is set before him, for he himself stands in no need of food. Mead is for him both food and drink. He invented the Runic characters, and it is the business of the Norns to engrave the runes of fate upon a metal shield. From Odin's name, spelt Woden, as it sometimes is, came Wednesday, the name of the fourth day of the week.

Odin is frequently called Alfadur (All-father), but this name is sometimes used in a way that shows that

the Scandinavians had an idea of a deity superior to Odin, uncreated and eternal.

OF THE JOYS OF VALHALLA

Valhalla is the great hall of Odin, wherein he feasts with his chosen heroes, all those who have fallen bravely in battle, for all who die a peaceful death are excluded. The flesh of the boar Schrimnir is served up to them, and is abundant for all. For although this boar is cooked every morning, he becomes whole again every night. For drink the heroes are supplied abundantly with mead from the she-goat Heidrum. When the heroes are not feasting they amuse themselves with fighting. Every day they ride out into the court or field and fight until they cut each other in pieces. This is their pastime; but when meal time comes they recover from their wounds and return to feast in Valhalla.

THE VALKYRIE

The Valkyrie are warlike virgins, mounted upon horses and armed with helmets and spears. Odin, who is desirous to collect a great many heroes in Valhalla, to be able to meet the giants in a day when the final contest must come, sends down to every battle-field to make choice of those who shall be slain. The Valkyrie are his messengers, and their name means "Choosers of the slain." When they ride forth on their errand, their armor sheds a strange flickering light, which flashes up over the northern skies, making what men call the "Aurora Borealis," or "Northern Lights."¹

OF THOR AND THE OTHER GODS

Thor, the thunderer, Odin's eldest son, is the strongest of gods and men, and possesses three very precious things. The first is a hammer, which both the Frost and the Mountain giants know to their cost, when they see it hurled against them in the air, for it has split many a skull of their fathers and kindred. When

¹ Gray's ode, "The Fatal Sisters," is founded on this superstition.

thrown, it returns to his hand of its own accord. The second rare thing he possesses is called the belt of strength. When he girds it about him his divine might is doubled. The third, also very precious, is his iron gloves, which he puts on whenever he would use his mallet efficiently. From Thor's name is derived our word Thursday.

Frey is one of the most celebrated of the gods. He presides over rain and sunshine and all the fruits of the earth. His sister Freya is the most propitious of the goddesses. She loves music, spring, and flowers, and is particularly fond of the Elves (fairies). She is very fond of love ditties, and all lovers would do well to invoke her.

Bragi is the god of poetry, and his song records the deeds of warriors. His wife, Iduna, keeps in a box the apples which the gods, when they feel old age approaching, have only to taste of to become young again.

Heimdall is the watchman of the gods, and is therefore placed on the borders of heaven to prevent the giants from forcing their way over the bridge Bifrost (the rainbow). He requires less sleep than a bird, and sees by night as well as by day a hundred miles around him. So acute is his ear that no sound escapes him, for he can even hear the grass grow and the wool on a sheep's back.

OF LOKI AND HIS PROGENY

There is another deity who is described as the calumniator of the gods and the contriver of all fraud and mischief. His name is Loki. He is handsome and well made, but of a very fickle mood and most evil disposition. He is of the giant race, but forced himself into the company of the gods, and seems to take pleasure in bringing them into difficulties, and in extricating them out of the danger by his cunning, wit, and skill. Loki has three children. The first is the wolf Fenris, the second the Midgard serpent, the third Hela (Death). The gods were not ignorant that these monsters were growing up, and that they would one day bring much

evil upon gods and men. So Odin deemed it advisable to send one to bring them to him. When they came he threw the serpent into that deep ocean by which the earth is surrounded. But the monster had grown to such an enormous size that holding his tail in his mouth he encircles the whole earth. Hela he cast into Niffleheim, and gave her power over nine worlds or regions, into which she distributes those who are sent to her; that is, all who die of sickness or old age. Her hall is called Elvidner. Hunger is her table, Starvation her knife, Delay her man, Slowness her maid, Precipice her threshold, Care her bed, and Burning Anguish forms the hangings of the apartments. She may easily be recognized, for her body is half flesh color and half blue, and she has a dreadfully stern and forbidding countenance.

The wolf Fenris gave the gods a great deal of trouble before they succeeded in chaining him. He broke the strongest fetters as if they were made of cobwebs. Finally the gods sent a messenger to the mountain spirits, who made for them the chain called Gleipnir. It is fashioned of six things, viz., the noise made by the footfall of a cat, the beards of women, the roots of stones, the breath of fishes, the nerves (sensibilities) of bears, and the spittle of birds. When finished it was as smooth and soft as a silken string. But when the gods asked the wolf to suffer himself to be bound with this apparently slight ribbon, he suspected their design, fearing that it was made by enchantment. He therefore only consented to be bound with it upon condition that one of the gods put his hand in his (Fenris's) mouth as a pledge that the band was to be removed again. Tyr (the god of battles) alone had courage enough to do this. But when the wolf found that he could not break his fetters, and that the gods would not release him, he bit off Tyr's hand, and he has ever since remained one-handed.

HOW THOR PAID THE MOUNTAIN GIANT HIS WAGES

Once on a time, when the gods were constructing their abodes and had already finished Midgard and Val-

halla, a certain artificer came and offered to build them a residence so well fortified that they should be perfectly safe from the incursions of the Frost giants and the giants of the mountains. But he demanded for his reward the goddess Freya, together with the sun and moon. The gods yielded to his terms, provided he would finish the whole work himself without any one's assistance, and all within the space of one winter. But if anything remained unfinished on the first day of summer he should forfeit the recompense agreed on. On being told these terms the artificer stipulated that he should be allowed the use of his horse Svadilfari, and this by the advice of Loki was granted to him. He accordingly set to work on the first day of winter, and during the night let his horse draw stone for the building. The enormous size of the stones struck the gods with astonishment, and they saw clearly that the horse did one-half more of the toilsome work than his master. Their bargain, however, had been concluded, and confirmed by solemn oaths, for without these precautions a giant would not have thought himself safe among the gods, especially when Thor should return from an expedition he had then undertaken against the evil demons.

As the winter drew to a close, the building was far advanced, and the bulwarks were sufficiently high and massive to render the place impregnable. In short, when it wanted but three days to summer, the only part that remained to be finished was the gateway. Then sat the gods on their seats of justice and entered into consultation, inquiring of one another who among them could have advised to give Freya away, or to plunge the heavens in darkness by permitting the giant to carry away the sun and the moon.

They all agreed that no one but Loki, the author of so many evil deeds, could have given such bad counsel, and that he should be put to a cruel death if he did not contrive some way to prevent the artificer from completing his task and obtaining the stipulated recompense. They proceeded to lay hands on Loki, who in his fright promised upon oath that, let it cost him what it would, he would so manage matters that the man

should lose his reward. That very night when the man went with Svadilfari for building stone, a mare suddenly ran out of a forest and began to neigh. The horse thereat broke loose and ran after the mare into the forest, which obliged the man also to run after his horse, and thus between one and another the whole night was lost, so that at dawn the work had not made the usual progress. The man, seeing that he must fail of completing his task, resumed his own gigantic stature, and the gods now clearly perceived that it was in reality a mountain giant who had come amongst them. Feeling no longer bound by their oaths, they called on Thor, who immediately ran to their assistance, and lifting up his mallet, paid the workman his wages, not with the sun and moon, and not even by sending him back to Jotunheim, for with the first blow he shattered the giant's skull to pieces and hurled him headlong into Niffleheim.

THE RECOVERY OF THE HAMMER

Once upon a time it happened that Thor's hammer fell into the possession of the giant Thrym, who buried it eight fathoms deep under the rocks of Jotunheim. Thor sent Loki to negotiate with Thrym, but he could only prevail so far as to get the giant's promise to restore the weapon if Freya would consent to be his bride. Loki returned and reported the result of his mission, but the goddess of love was quite horrified at the idea of bestowing her charms on the king of the Frost giants. In this emergency Loki persuaded Thor to dress himself in Freya's clothes and accompany him to Jotunheim. Thrym received his veiled bride with due courtesy, but was greatly surprised at seeing her eat for her supper eight salmons and a full grown ox, besides other delicacies, washing the whole down with three tuns of mead. Loki, however, assured him that she had not tasted anything for eight long nights, so great was her desire to see her lover, the renowned ruler of Jotunheim. Thrym had at length the curiosity to peep under his bride's veil, but started back in affright and demanded

why Freya's eyeballs glistened with fire. Loki repeated the same excuse and the giant was satisfied. He ordered the hammer to be brought in and laid on the maiden's lap. Thereupon Thor threw off his disguise, grasped his redoubted weapon, and slaughtered Thrym and all his followers.

Frey also possessed a wonderful weapon, a sword which would of itself spread a field with carnage whenever the owner desired it. Frey parted with this sword, but was less fortunate than Thor and never recovered it. It happened in this way: Frey once mounted Odin's throne, from whence one can see over the whole universe, and looking round saw far off in the giant's kingdom a beautiful maid, at the sight of whom he was struck with sudden sadness, insomuch that from that moment he could neither sleep, nor drink, nor speak. At last Skirnir, his messenger, drew his secret from him, and undertook to get him the maiden for his bride, if he would give him his sword as a reward. Frey consented and gave him the sword, and Skirnir set off on his journey and obtained the maiden's promise that within nine nights she would come to a certain place and there wed Frey. Skirnir having reported the success of his errand, Frey exclaimed:

"Long is one night,
Long are two nights,
But how shall I hold out three?
Shorter hath seemed
A month to me oft
Than of this longing time the half."

So Frey obtained Gerda, the most beautiful of all women, for his wife, but he lost his sword.

This story, entitled "Skirnir For," and the one immediately preceding it, "Thrym's Quida," will be found poetically told in Longfellow's "Poets and Poetry of Europe."

CHAPTER XXXIX

THOR'S VISIT TO JOTUNHEIM

THOR'S VISIT TO JOTUNHEIM, THE GIANT'S COUNTRY

ONE day the god Thor, with his servant Thialfi, and accompanied by Loki, set out on a journey to the giant's country. Thialfi was of all men the swiftest of foot. He bore Thor's wallet, containing their provisions. When night came on they found themselves in an immense forest, and searched on all sides for a place where they might pass the night, and at last came to a very large hall, with an entrance that took the whole breadth of one end of the building. Here they lay down to sleep, but towards midnight were alarmed by an earthquake which shook the whole edifice. Thor, rising up, called on his companions to seek with him a place of safety. On the right they found an adjoining chamber, into which the others entered, but Thor remained at the doorway with his mallet in his hand, prepared to defend himself, whatever might happen. A terrible groaning was heard during the night, and at dawn of day Thor went out and found lying near him a huge giant, who slept and snored in the way that had alarmed them so. It is said that for once Thor was afraid to use his mallet, and as the giant soon waked up, Thor contented himself with simply asking his name.

"My name is Skrymir," said the giant, "but I need not ask thy name, for I know that thou art the god Thor. But what has become of my glove?" Thor then perceived that what they had taken overnight for a hall was the giant's glove, and the chamber where his two companions had sought refuge was the thumb. Skrymir then proposed that they should travel in company, and Thor consenting, they sat down to eat their breakfast, and when they had done, Skrymir packed all the provisions into one wallet, threw it over his shoulder, and strode on before them, taking such tremendous

strides that they were hard put to it to keep up with him. So they travelled the whole day, and at dusk Skrymir chose a place for them to pass the night in under a large oak tree. Skrymir then told them he would lie down to sleep. "But take ye the wallet," he added, "and prepare your supper."

Skrymir soon fell asleep and began to snore strongly; but when Thor tried to open the wallet, he found the giant had tied it up so tight he could not untie a single knot. At last Thor became wroth, and grasping his mallet with both hands he struck a furious blow on the giant's head. Skrymir, awakening, merely asked whether a leaf had not fallen on his head, and whether they had supped and were ready to go to sleep. Thor answered that they were just going to sleep, and so saying went and laid himself down under another tree. But sleep came not that night to Thor, and when Skrymir snored again so loud that the forest reëchoed with the noise, he arose, and grasping his mallet launched it with such force at the giant's skull that it made a deep dint in it. Skrymir, awakening, cried out, "What's the matter? Are there any birds perched on this tree? I felt some moss from the branches fall on my head. How fares it with thee, Thor?" But Thor went away hastily, saying that he had just then awoke, and that as it was only midnight, there was still time for sleep. He, however, resolved that if he had an opportunity of striking a third blow, it should settle all matters between them. A little before daybreak he perceived that Skrymir was again fast asleep, and again grasping his mallet, he dashed it with such violence that it forced its way into the giant's skull up to the handle. But Skrymir sat up, and stroking his cheek said, "An acorn fell on my head. What! Art thou awake, Thor? Methinks it is time for us to get up and dress ourselves; but you have not now a long way before you to the city called Utgard. I have heard you whispering to one another that I am not a man of small dimensions; but if you come to Utgard you will see there many men much taller than I. Wherefore, I advise you, when you come there, not to make too much of yourselves, for the

followers of Utgard-Loki will not brook the boasting of such little fellows as you are. You must take the road that leads eastward, mine lies northward, so we must part here."

Hereupon he threw his wallet over his shoulders and turned away from them into the forest, and Thor had no wish to stop him or to ask for any more of his company.

Thor and his companions proceeded on their way, and towards noon descried a city standing in the middle of a plain. It was so lofty that they were obliged to bend their necks quite back on their shoulders in order to see to the top of it. On arriving they entered the city, and seeing a large palace before them with the door wide open, they went in, and found a number of men of prodigious stature, sitting on benches in the hall. Going further, they came before the king, Utgard-Loki, whom they saluted with great respect. The king, regarding them with a scornful smile, said, "If I do not mistake me, that stripling yonder must be the god Thor." Then addressing himself to Thor, he said, "Perhaps thou mayst be more than thou appearest to be. What are the feats that thou and thy fellows deem yourselves skilled in, for no one is permitted to remain here who does not, in some feat or other, excel all other men?"

"The feat that I know," said Loki, "is to eat quicker than any one else, and in this I am ready to give a proof against any one here who may choose to compete with me."

"That will indeed be a feat," said Utgard-Loki, "if thou performest what thou promisest, and it shall be tried forthwith."

He then ordered one of his men who was sitting at the farther end of the bench, and whose name was Logi, to come forward and try his skill with Loki. A trough filled with meat having been set on the hall floor, Loki placed himself at one end, and Logi at the other, and each of them began to eat as fast as he could, until they met in the middle of the trough. But it was found that Loki had only eaten the flesh, while his adversary had devoured both flesh and bone, and the

trough to boot. All the company therefore adjudged that Loki was vanquished.

Utgard-Loki then asked what feat the young man who accompanied Thor could perform. Thialfi answered that he would run a race with any one who might be matched against him. The king observed that skill in running was something to boast of, but if the youth would win the match he must display great agility. He then arose and went with all who were present to a plain where there was good ground for running on, and calling a young man named Hugi, bade him run a match with Thialfi. In the first course Hugi so much outstripped his competitor that he turned back and met him not far from the starting place. Then they ran a second and a third time, but Thialfi met with no better success.

Utgard-Loki then asked Thor in what feats he would choose to give proofs of that prowess for which he was so famous. Thor answered that he would try a drinking-match with any one. Utgard-Loki bade his cup-bearer bring the large horn which his followers were obliged to empty when they had trespassed in any way against the law of the feast. The cupbearer having presented it to Thor, Utgard-Loki said, "Whoever is a good drinker will empty that horn at a single draught, though most men make two of it, but the most puny drinker can do it in three."

Thor looked at the horn, which seemed of no extraordinary size though somewhat long; however, as he was very thirsty, he set it to his lips, and without drawing breath, pulled as long and as deeply as he could, that he might not be obliged to make a second draught of it; but when he set the horn down and looked in, he could scarcely perceive that the liquor was diminished.

After taking breath, Thor went to it again with all his might, but when he took the horn from his mouth, it seemed to him that he had drunk rather less than before, although the horn could now be carried without spilling.

"How now, Thor?" said Utgard-Loki; "thou must not spare thyself; if thou meanest to drain the horn

at the third draught thou must pull deeply; and I must needs say that thou wilt not be called so mighty a man here as thou art at home if thou showest no greater prowess in other feats than methinks will be shown in this."

Thor, full of wrath, again set the horn to his lips, and did his best to empty it; but on looking in found the liquor was only a little lower, so he resolved to make no further attempt, but gave back the horn to the cup-bearer.

"I now see plainly," said Utgard-Loki, "that thou art not quite so stout as we thought thee: but wilt thou try any other feat, though methinks thou art not likely to bear any prize away with thee hence."

"What new trial hast thou to propose?" said Thor.

"We have a very trifling game here," answered Utgard-Loki, "in which we exercise none but children. It consists in merely lifting my cat from the ground; nor should I have dared to mention such a feat to the great Thor if I had not already observed that thou art by no means what we took thee for."

As he finished speaking, a large gray cat sprang on the hall floor. Thor put his hand under the cat's belly and did his utmost to raise him from the floor, but the cat, bending his back, had, notwithstanding all Thor's efforts, only one of his feet lifted up, seeing which Thor made no further attempt.

"This trial has turned out," said Utgard-Loki, "just as I imagined it would. The cat is large, but Thor is little in comparison to our men."

"Little as ye call me," answered Thor, "let me see who among you will come hither now I am in wrath and wrestle with me."

"I see no one here," said Utgard-Loki, looking at the men sitting on the benches, "who would not think it beneath him to wrestle with thee; let somebody, however, call hither that old crone, my nurse Elli, and let Thor wrestle with her if he will. She has thrown to the ground many a man not less strong than this Thor is."

A toothless old woman then entered the hall, and

was told by Utgard-Loki to take hold of Thor. The tale is shortly told. The more Thor tightened his hold on the crone the firmer she stood. At length after a very violent struggle Thor began to lose his footing, and was finally brought down upon one knee. Utgard-Loki then told them to desist, adding that Thor had now no occasion to ask any one else in the hall to wrestle with him, and it was also getting late; so he showed Thor and his companions to their seats, and they passed the night there in good cheer.

The next morning, at break of day, Thor and his companions dressed themselves and prepared for their departure. Utgard-Loki ordered a table to be set for them, on which there was no lack of victuals or drink. After the repast Utgard-Loki led them to the gate of the city, and on parting asked Thor how he thought his journey had turned out, and whether he had met with any men stronger than himself. Thor told him that he could not deny but that he had brought great shame on himself. "And what grieves me most," he added, "is that ye will call me a person of little worth."

"Nay," said Utgard-Loki, "it behooves me to tell thee the truth, now thou art out of the city, which so long as I live and have my way thou shalt never enter again. And, by my troth, had I known beforehand that thou hadst so much strength in thee, and wouldst have brought me so near to a great mishap, I would not have suffered thee to enter this time. Know then that I have all along deceived thee by my illusions; first in the forest, where I tied up the wallet with iron wire so that thou couldst not untie it. After this thou gavest me three blows with thy mallet; the first, though the least, would have ended my days had it fallen on me, but I slipped aside and thy blows fell on the mountain, where thou wilt find three glens, one of them remarkably deep. These are the dints made by thy mallet. I have made use of similar illusions in the contests you have had with my followers. In the first, Loki, like hunger itself, devoured all that was set before him, but Logi was in reality nothing else than Fire, and therefore consumed not only the meat, but the trough

which held it. Hugi, with whom Thialfi contended in running, was Thought, and it was impossible for Thialfi to keep pace with that. When thou in thy turn didst attempt to empty the horn, thou didst perform, by my troth, a deed so marvellous that had I not seen it myself I should never have believed it. For one end of that horn reached the sea, which thou wast not aware of, but when thou comest to the shore thou wilt perceive how much the sea has sunk by thy draughts. Thou didst perform a feat no less wonderful by lifting up the cat, and to tell thee the truth, when we saw that one of his paws was off the floor, we were all of us terror-stricken, for what thou tookest for a cat was in reality the Midgard serpent that encompasseth the earth, and he was so stretched by thee that he was barely long enough to enclose it between his head and tail. Thy wrestling with Elli was also a most astonishing feat, for there was never yet a man, nor ever will be, whom Old Age, for such in fact was Elli, will not sooner or later lay low. But now, as we are going to part, let me tell thee that it will be better for both of us if thou never come near me again, for shouldst thou do so, I shall again defend myself by other illusions, so that thou wilt only lose thy labor and get no fame from the contest with me."

On hearing these words Thor in a rage laid hold of his mallet and would have launched it at him, but Utgard-Loki had disappeared, and when Thor would have returned to the city to destroy it, he found nothing around him but a verdant plain.

CHAPTER XL

THE DEATH OF BALDUR—THE ELVES—RUNIC LETTERS—
ICELAND—TEUTONIC MYTHOLOGY—NIBELUNGEN LIED

THE DEATH OF BALDUR

BALDUR the Good, having been tormented with terrible dreams indicating that his life was in peril, told

them to the assembled gods, who resolved to conjure all things to avert from him the threatened danger. Then Frigga, the wife of Odin, exacted an oath from fire and water, from iron and all other metals, from stones, trees, diseases, beasts, birds, poisons, and creeping things, that none of them would do any harm to Baldur. Odin, not satisfied with all this, and feeling alarmed for the fate of his son, determined to consult the prophetess Angerbode, a giantess, mother of Fenris, Hela, and the Midgard serpent. She was dead, and Odin was forced to seek her in Hela's dominions. This Descent of Odin forms the subject of Gray's fine ode beginning,—

“Uprose the king of men with speed
And saddled straight his coal-black steed.”

But the other gods, feeling that what Frigga had done was quite sufficient, amused themselves with using Baldur as a mark, some hurling darts at him, some stones, while others hewed at him with their swords and battle-axes; for do what they would, none of them could harm him. And this became a favorite pastime with them and was regarded as an honor shown to Baldur. But when Loki beheld the scene he was sorely vexed that Baldur was not hurt. Assuming, therefore, the shape of a woman, he went to Fensalir, the mansion of Frigga. That goddess, when she saw the pretended woman, inquired of her if she knew what the gods were doing at their meetings. She replied that they were throwing darts and stones at Baldur, without being able to hurt him. “Ay,” said Frigga, “neither stones, nor sticks, nor anything else can hurt Baldur, for I have exacted an oath from all of them.” “What,” exclaimed the woman, “have all things sworn to spare Baldur?” “All things,” replied Frigga, “except one little shrub that grows on the eastern side of Valhalla, and is called Mistletoe, and which I thought too young and feeble to crave an oath from.”

As soon as Loki heard this he went away, and resuming his natural shape, cut off the mistletoe, and repaired to the place where the gods were assembled. There he found Hodur standing apart, without partak-

ing of the sports, on account of his blindness, and going up to him, said, "Why dost thou not also throw something at Baldur?"

"Because I am blind," answered Hodur, "and see not where Baldur is, and have, moreover, nothing to throw."

"Come, then," said Loki, "do like the rest, and show honor to Baldur by throwing this twig at him, and I will direct thy arm towards the place where he stands."

Hodur then took the mistletoe, and under the guidance of Loki, darted it at Baldur, who, pierced through and through, fell down lifeless. Surely never was there witnessed, either among gods or men, a more atrocious deed than this. When Baldur fell, the gods were struck speechless with horror, and then they looked at each other, and all were of one mind to lay hands on him who had done the deed, but they were obliged to delay their vengeance out of respect for the sacred place where they were assembled. They gave vent to their grief by loud lamentations. When the gods came to themselves, Frigga asked who among them wished to gain all her love and good will. "For this," said she, "shall he have who will ride to Hel and offer Hela a ransom if she will let Baldur return to Asgard." Whereupon Hermod, surnamed the Nimble, the son of Odin, offered to undertake the journey. Odin's horse, Sleipnir, which has eight legs and can outrun the wind, was then led forth, on which Hermod mounted and galloped away on his mission. For the space of nine days and as many nights he rode through deep glens so dark that he could not discern anything, until he arrived at the river Gyll, which he passed over on a bridge covered with glittering gold. The maiden who kept the bridge asked him his name and lineage, telling him that the day before five bands of dead persons had ridden over the bridge, and did not shake it as much as he alone. "But," she added, "thou hast not death's hue on thee; why then ridest thou here on the way to Hel?"

"I ride to Hel," answered Hermod, "to seek Baldur. Hast thou perchance seen him pass this way?"

She replied, "Baldur hath ridden over Gyll's bridge,

and yonder lieth the way he took to the abodes of death."

Hermod pursued his journey until he came to the barred gates of Hel. Here he alighted, girthed his saddle tighter, and remounting clapped both spurs to his horse, who cleared the gate by a tremendous leap without touching it. Hermod then rode on to the palace, where he found his brother Baldur occupying the most distinguished seat in the hall, and passed the night in his company. The next morning he besought Hela to let Baldur ride home with him, assuring her that nothing but lamentations were to be heard among the gods. Hela answered that it should now be tried whether Baldur was so beloved as he was said to be. "If, therefore," she added, "all things in the world, both living and lifeless, weep for him, then shall he return to life; but if any one thing speak against him or refuse to weep, he shall be kept in Hel."

Hermod then rode back to Asgard and gave an account of all he had heard and witnessed.

The gods upon this despatched messengers throughout the world to beg everything to weep in order that Baldur might be delivered from Hel. All things very willingly complied with this request, both men and every other living being, as well as earths, and stones, and trees, and metals, just as we have all seen these things weep when they are brought from a cold place into a hot one. As the messengers were returning, they found an old hag named Thaukt sitting in a cavern, and begged her to weep Baldur out of Hel. But she answered,

"Thaukt will wail
With dry tears
Baldur's bale-fire.
Let Hela keep her own."

It was strongly suspected that this hag was no other than Loki himself, who never ceased to work evil among gods and men. So Baldur was prevented from coming back to Asgard.¹

¹ In Longfellow's Poems will be found a poem entitled "Tegner's Drapa," upon the subject of Baldur's death.

THE FUNERAL OF BALDUR

The gods took up the dead body and bore it to the seashore where stood Baldur's ship "Hringham," which passed for the largest in the world. Baldur's dead body was put on the funeral pile, on board the ship, and his wife Nanna was so struck with grief at the sight that she broke her heart, and her body was burned on the same pile as her husband's. There was a vast concourse of various kinds of people at Baldur's obsequies. First came Odin accompanied by Frigga, the Valkyrie, and his ravens; then Frey in his car drawn by Gullinbursti, the boar; Heimdall rode his horse Gulltopp, and Freya drove in her chariot drawn by cats. There were also a great many Frost giants and giants of the mountain present. Baldur's horse was led to the pile fully caparisoned and consumed in the same flames with his master.

But Loki did not escape his deserved punishment. When he saw how angry the gods were, he fled to the mountain, and there built himself a hut with four doors, so that he could see every approaching danger. He invented a net to catch the fishes, such as fishermen have used since his time. But Odin found out his hiding-place and the gods assembled to take him. He, seeing this, changed himself into a salmon, and lay hid among the stones of the brook. But the gods took his net and dragged the brook, and Loki, finding he must be caught, tried to leap over the net; but Thor caught him by the tail and compressed it, so that salmons ever since have had that part remarkably fine and thin. They bound him with chains and suspended a serpent over his head, whose venom falls upon his face drop by drop. His wife Siguna sits by his side and catches the drops as they fall, in a cup; but when she carries it away to empty it, the venom falls upon Loki, which makes him howl with horror, and twist his body about so violently that the whole earth shakes, and this produces what men call earthquakes.

THE ELVES

The Edda mentions another class of beings, inferior to the gods, but still possessed of great power; these were called Elves. The white spirits, or Elves of Light, were exceedingly fair, more brilliant than the sun, and clad in garments of a delicate and transparent texture. They loved the light, were kindly disposed to mankind, and generally appeared as fair and lovely children. Their country was called Alfheim, and was the domain of Freyr, the god of the sun, in whose light they were always sporting.

The Black or Night Elves were a different kind of creatures. Ugly, long-nosed dwarfs, of a dirty brown color, they appeared only at night, for they avoided the sun as their most deadly enemy, because whenever his beams fell upon any of them they changed them immediately into stones. Their language was the echo of solitudes, and their dwelling-places subterranean caves and clefts. They were supposed to have come into existence as maggots produced by the decaying flesh of Ymir's body, and were afterwards endowed by the gods with a human form and great understanding. They were particularly distinguished for a knowledge of the mysterious powers of nature, and for the runes which they carved and explained. They were the most skilful artificers of all created beings, and worked in metals and in wood. Among their most noted works were Thor's hammer, and the ship "Skidbladnir," which they gave to Freyr, and which was so large that it could contain all the deities with their war and household implements, but so skillfully was it wrought that when folded together it could be put into a side pocket.

RAGNAROK, THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

It was a firm belief of the northern nations that a time would come when all the visible creation, the gods of Valhalla and Niffleheim, the inhabitants of Jotunheim, Alfheim, and Midgard, together with their habitations, would be destroyed. The fearful day of destruction

will not, however, be without its forerunners. First will come a triple winter, during which snow will fall from the four corners of the heavens, the frost be very severe, the wind piercing, the weather tempestuous, and the sun impart no gladness. Three such winters will pass away without being tempered by a single summer. Three other similar winters will then follow, during which war and discord will spread over the universe. The earth itself will be frightened and begin to tremble, the sea leave its basin, the heavens tear asunder, and men perish in great numbers, and the eagles of the air feast upon their still quivering bodies. The wolf Fenris will now break his bands, the Midgard serpent rise out of her bed in the sea, and Loki, released from his bonds, will join the enemies of the gods. Amidst the general devastation the sons of Muspelheim will rush forth under their leader Surtur, before and behind whom are flames and burning fire. Onward they ride over Bifrost, the rainbow bridge, which breaks under the horses' hoofs. But they, disregarding its fall, direct their course to the battlefield called Vigrid. Thither also repair the wolf Fenris, the Midgard serpent, Loki with all the followers of Hela, and the Frost giants.

Heimdall now stands up and sounds the Giallar horn to assemble the gods and heroes for the contest. The gods advance, led on by Odin, who engages the wolf Fenris, but falls a victim to the monster, who is, however, slain by Vidar, Odin's son. Thor gains great renown by killing the Midgard serpent, but recoils and falls dead, suffocated with the venom which the dying monster vomits over him. Loki and Heimdall meet and fight till they are both slain. The gods and their enemies having fallen in battle, Surtur, who has killed Freyr, darts fire and flames over the world, and the whole universe is burned up. The sun becomes dim, the earth sinks into the ocean, the stars fall from heaven, and time is no more.

After this Alfadur (the Almighty) will cause a new heaven and a new earth to arise out of the sea. The new earth filled with abundant supplies will spontaneously produce its fruits without labor or care. Wicked-

ness and misery will no more be known, but the gods and men will live happily together.

RUNIC LETTERS

One cannot travel far in Denmark, Norway, or Sweden without meeting with great stones of different forms, engraven with characters called Runic, which appear at first sight very different from all we know. The letters consist almost invariably of straight lines, in the shape of little sticks either singly or put together. Such sticks were in early times used by the northern nations for the purpose of ascertaining future events. The sticks were shaken up, and from the figures that they formed a kind of divination was derived.

The Runic characters were of various kinds. They were chiefly used for magical purposes. The noxious, or, as they called them, the *bitter* runes, were employed to bring various evils on their enemies; the favorable averted misfortune. Some were medicinal, others employed to win love, etc. In later times they were frequently used for inscriptions, of which more than a thousand have been found. The language is a dialect of the Gothic, called Norse, still in use in Iceland. The inscriptions may therefore be read with certainty, but hitherto very few have been found which throw the least light on history. They are mostly epitaphs on tombstones.

Gray's ode on the "Descent of Odin" contains an allusion to the use of Runic letters for incantation:

"Facing to the northern clime,
Thrice he traced the Runic rhyme;
Thrice pronounced, in accents dread,
The thrilling verse that wakes the dead,
Till from out the hollow ground
Slowly breathed a sullen sound."

THE SKALDS

The Skalds were the bards and poets of the nation, a very important class of men in all communities in an early stage of civilization. They are the depositaries of

whatever historic lore there is, and it is their office to mingle something of intellectual gratification with the rude feasts of the warriors, by rehearsing, with such accompaniments of poetry and music as their skill can afford, the exploits of their heroes living or dead. The compositions of the Skalds were called Sagas, many of which have come down to us, and contain valuable materials of history, and a faithful picture of the state of society at the time to which they relate.

ICELAND

The Eddas and Sagas have come to us from Iceland. The following extract from Carlyle's lectures on "Heroes and Hero Worship" gives an animated account of the region where the strange stories we have been reading had their origin. Let the reader contrast it for a moment with Greece, the parent of classical mythology:

"In that strange island, Iceland,—burst up, 'the geologists say, by fire from the bottom of the sea, a wild land of barrenness and lava, swallowed many months of every year in black tempests, yet with a wild, gleaming beauty in summer time, towering up there stern and grim in the North Ocean, with its snow yokuls [mountains], roaring geysers [boiling springs], sulphur pools, and horrid volcanic chasms, like the waste, chaotic battle-field of Frost and Fire,—where, of all places, we least looked for literature or written memorials,—the record of these things was written down. On the seaboard of this wild land is a rim of grassy country, where cattle can subsist, and men by means of them and of what the sea yields; and it seems they were poetic men these, men who had deep thoughts in them and uttered musically their thoughts. Much would be lost had Iceland not been burst up from the sea, not been discovered by the Northmen!"

TEUTONIC MYTHOLOGY

In the mythology of Germany proper, the name of Odin appears as Wotan; Freya and Frigga are regarded as one and the same divinity, and the gods are in general

represented as less warlike in character than those in the Scandinavian myths. As a whole, however, Teutonic mythology runs along almost identical lines with that of the northern nations. The most notable divergence is due to modifications of the legends by reason of the difference in climatic conditions. The more advanced social condition of the Germans is also apparent in their mythology.

THE NIBELUNGEN LIED

One of the oldest myths of the Teutonic race is found in the great national epic of the Nibelungen Lied, which dates back to the prehistoric era when Wotan, Frigga, Thor, Loki, and the other gods and goddesses were worshipped in the German forests. The epic is divided into two parts, the first of which tells how Siegfried, the youngest of the kings of the Netherlands, went to Worms, to ask in marriage the hand of Kriemhild, sister of Günther, King of Burgundy. While he was staying with Günther, Siegfried helped the Burgundian king to secure as his wife Brunhild, queen of Issland. The latter had announced publicly that he only should be her husband who could beat her in hurling a spear, throwing a huge stone, and in leaping. Siegfried, who possessed a cloak of invisibility, aided Günther in these three contests, and Brunhild became his wife. In return for these services, Günther gave Siegfried his sister Kriemhild in marriage.

After some time had elapsed, Siegfried and Kriemhild went to visit Günther, when the two women fell into a dispute about the relative merits of their husbands. Kriemhild, to exalt Siegfried, boasted that it was to the latter that Günther owed his victories and his wife. Brunhild, in great anger, employed Hagan, liegeman of Günther, to murder Siegfried. In the epic Hagan is described as follows:

"Well-grown and well-compacted was that redoubted guest;
Long were his legs and sinewy, and deep and broad his chest;
His hair, that once was sable, with gray was dashed of late;
Most terrible his visage, and lordly was his gait."

—*Nibelungen Lied*, stanza 1789.

This Achilles of German romance stabbed Siegfried between the shoulders, as the unfortunate King of the Netherlands was stooping to drink from a brook during a hunting expedition.

The second part of the epic relates how, thirteen years later, Kriemhild married Etzel, King of the Huns. After a time, she invited the King of Burgundy, with Hagan and many others, to the court of her husband. A fearful quarrel was stirred up in the banquet hall, which ended in the slaughter of all the Burgundians but Günther and Hagan. These two were taken prisoners and given to Kriemhild, who with her own hand cut off the heads of both. For this bloody act of vengeance Kriemhild was herself slain by Hildebrand, a magician and champion, who in German mythology holds a place to an extent corresponding to that of Nestor in the Greek mythology.

THE NIBELUNGEN HOARD

This was a mythical mass of gold and precious stones which Siegfried obtained from the Nibelungs, the people of the north whom he had conquered and whose country he had made tributary to his own kingdom of the Netherlands. Upon his marriage, Siegfried gave the treasure to Kriemhild as her wedding portion. After the murder of Siegfried, Hagan seized it and buried it secretly beneath the Rhine at Lochham, intending to recover it at a future period. The hoard was lost forever when Hagan was killed by Kriemhild. Its wonders are thus set forth in the poem:

“’Twas as much as twelve huge wagons in four whole nights
and days
Could carry from the mountain down to the salt sea bay;
Though to and fro each wagon thrice journeyed every day.

“It was made up of nothing but precious stones and gold;
Were all the world bought from it, and down the value told,
Not a mark the less would there be left than erst there was, I
ween.”

—*Nibelungen Lied*, XIX.

Whoever possessed the Nibelungen hoard were termed Nibelungers. Thus at one time certain people of Norway were so called. When Siegfried held the treasure he received the title "King of the Nibelungers."

WAGNER'S NIBELUNGEN RING

Though Richard Wagner's music-drama of the Nibelungen Ring bears some resemblance to the ancient German epic, it is a wholly independent composition and was derived from various old songs and sagas, which the dramatist wove into one great harmonious story. The principal source was the Volsunga Saga, while lesser parts were taken from the Elder Edda and the Younger Edda, and others from the Nibelungen Lied, the Ecklenlied, and other Teutonic folklore.

In the drama there are at first only four distinct races,—the gods, the giants, the dwarfs, and the nymphs. Later, by a special creation, there come the valkyrie and the heroes. The gods are the noblest and highest race, and dwell first in the mountain meadows, later in the palace of Valhalla on the heights. The giants are a great and strong race, but lack wisdom; they hate what is noble, and are enemies of the gods; they dwell in caves near the earth's surface. The dwarfs, or *nibelungs*, are black uncouth pigmies, hating the good, hating the gods; they are crafty and cunning, and dwell in the bowels of the earth. The nymphs are pure, innocent creatures of the water. The valkyrie are daughters of the gods, but mingled with a mortal strain; they gather dead heroes from the battle-fields and carry them to Valhalla. The heroes are children of the gods, but also mingled with a mortal strain; they are destined to become at last the highest race of all, and to succeed the gods in the government of the world.

The principal gods are Wotan, Loki, Donner, and Froh. The chief giants are Fafner and Fasolt, brothers. The chief dwarfs are Alberich and Mime, brothers, and later Hagan, son of Alberich. The chief nymphs are the Rhine-daughters, Flosshilda, Woglinda, and Wellgunda. There are nine Valkyrie, of whom Brunhild is the leading one.



A VALKYR.

From painting by P. N. Arbo.

Wagner's story of the Ring may be summarized as follows:

A hoard of gold exists in the depths of the Rhine, guarded by the innocent Rhine-maidens. Alberich, the dwarf, forswears love to gain this gold. He makes it into a magic ring. It gives him all power, and he gathers by it a vast amount of treasures.

Meanwhile Wotan, chief of the gods, has engaged the giants to build for him a noble castle, Valhalla, from whence to rule the world, promising in payment Freya, goddess of youth and love. But the gods find they cannot spare Freya, as they are dependent on her for their immortal youth. Loki, called upon to provide a substitute, tells of Alberich's magic ring and other treasure. Wotan goes with Loki, and they steal the ring and the golden hoard from Alberich, who curses the ring and lays the curse on all who shall henceforth possess it. The gods give the ring and the treasure to the giants as a substitute for Freya. The curse at once begins. One giant, Fafner, kills his brother to get all, and transforms himself into a dragon to guard his wealth. The gods enter Valhalla over the rainbow bridge. This ends the first part of the drama, called the Rhine-Gold.

The second part, the Valkyrie, relates how Wotan still covets the ring. He cannot take it himself, for he has given his word to the giants. He stands or falls by his word. So he devises an artifice to get the ring. He will get a hero-race to work for him and recover the ring and the treasures. Siegmund and Sieglinde are twin children of this new race. Sieglinde is carried off as a child and is forced into marriage with Hunding. Siegmund comes, and unknowingly breaks the law of marriage, but wins Nothung, the great sword, and a bride. Brunhild, chief of the Valkyrie, is commissioned by Wotan at the instance of Fricka, goddess of marriage, to slay him for his sin. She disobeys and tries to save him, but Hunding, helped by Wotan, slays him. Sieglinde, however, about to bear the free hero, to be called Siegfried, is saved by Brunhild, and hid in the forest. Brunhild herself is punished by being made a mortal woman. She is left sleeping on the

mountains with a wall of fire around her which only a hero can penetrate.

The drama continues with the story of Siegfried, which opens with a scene in the smithy between Mime the dwarf and Siegfried. Mime is welding a sword, and Siegfried scorns him. Mime tells him something of his mother, Sieglinda, and shows him the broken pieces of his father's sword. Wotan comes and tells Mime that only one who has no fear can remake the sword. Now Siegfried knows no fear and soon remakes the sword Nothung. Wotan and Alberich come to where the dragon Fafner is guarding the ring. They both long for it, but neither can take it. Soon Mime comes bringing Siegfried with the mighty sword. Fafner comes out, but Siegfried slays him. Happening to touch his lips with the dragon's blood, he understands the language of the birds. They tell him of the ring. He goes and gets it. Siegfried now has possession of the ring, but it is to bring him nothing of happiness, only evil. It is to curse love and finally bring death. The birds also tell him of Mime's treachery. He slays Mime. He longs for some one to love. The birds tell him of the slumbering Brunnhilda, whom he finds and marries.

The Dusk of the Gods portrays at the opening the three norns or fates weaving and measuring the thread of destiny. It is the beginning of the end. The perfect pair, Siegfried and Brunhild, appear in all the glory of their life, splendid ideals of manhood and womanhood. But Siegfried goes out into the world to achieve deeds of prowess. He gives her the Nibelungen ring to keep as a pledge of his love till his return. Meanwhile Alberich also has begotten a son, Hagan, to achieve for him the possession of the ring. He is partly of the Gibichung race, and works through Günther and Gut-rune, half-brother and half-sister to him. They beguile Siegfried to them, give him a magic draught which makes him forget Brunhild and fall in love with Gut-rune. Under this same spell, he offers to bring Brunhild for wife to Günther. Now is Valhalla full of sorrow and despair. The gods fear the end. Wotan murmurs, "O that she would give back the ring to the

Rhine." But Brunhild will not give it up,—it is now her pledge of love. Siegfried comes, takes the ring, and Brunhild is now brought to the Rhine castle of the Gibichungs, but Siegfried under the spell does not love her. She is to be wedded to Günther. She rises in wrath and denounces Siegfried. But at a hunting banquet Siegfried is given another magic draught, remembers all, and is slain by Hagan by a blow in the back, as he calls on Brunhild's name in love. Then comes the end. The body of Siegfried is burned on a funeral pyre, a grand funeral march is heard, and Brunhild rides into the flames and sacrifices herself for love's sake; the ring goes back to the Rhine-daughters; and the old world—of the gods of Valhalla, of passion and sin—is burnt up with flames, for the gods have broken moral law, and coveted power rather than love, gold rather than truth, and therefore must perish. They pass, and a new era, the reign of love and truth, has begun.

Those who wish to study the differences in the legends of the Nibelungen Lied and the Nibelungen Ring, and the way in which Wagner used his ancient material, are referred to Professor W. C. Sawyer's book on "Teutonic Legends in the Nibelungen Lied and the Nibelungen Ring," where the matter is treated in full detail. For a very thorough and clear analysis of the Ring as Wagner gives it, with a study of the musical motifs, probably nothing is better for general readers than the volume "The Epic of Sounds," by Freda Winworth. The more scholarly work of Professor Lavignac is indispensable for the student of Wagner's dramas. There is much illuminating comment on the sources and materials in "Legends of the Wagner Drama" by J. L. Weston.

CHAPTER XLI

THE DRUIDS—IONA

DRUIDS

THE Druids were the priests or ministers of religion among the ancient Celtic nations in Gaul, Britain, and Germany. Our information respecting them is borrowed from notices in the Greek and Roman writers, compared with the remains of Welsh and Gaelic poetry still extant.

The Druids combined the functions of the priest, the magistrate, the scholar, and the physician. They stood to the people of the Celtic tribes in a relation closely analogous to that in which the Brahmans of India, the Magi of Persia, and the priests of the Egyptians stood to the people respectively by whom they were revered.

The Druids taught the existence of one god, to whom they gave a name "Be' al," which Celtic antiquaries tell us means "the life of everything," or "the source of all beings," and which seems to have affinity with the Phœnician Baal. What renders this affinity more striking is that the Druids as well as the Phœnicians identified this, their supreme deity, with the *Sun*. Fire was regarded as a symbol of the divinity. The Latin writers assert that the Druids also worshipped numerous inferior gods.

They used no images to represent the object of their worship, nor did they meet in temples or buildings of any kind for the performance of their sacred rites. A circle of stones (each stone generally of vast size), enclosing an area of from twenty feet to thirty yards in diameter, constituted their sacred place. The most celebrated of these now remaining is Stonehenge, on Salisbury Plain, England.

These sacred circles were generally situated near some stream, or under the shadow of a grove or wide-spreading oak. In the centre of the circle stood the



STONEHENGE.

From a photograph.

Cromlech or altar, which was a large stone, placed in the manner of a table upon other stones set up on end. The Druids had also their high places, which were large stones or piles of stones on the summits of hills. These were called Cairns, and were used in the worship of the deity under the symbol of the sun.

That the Druids offered sacrifices to their deity there can be no doubt. But there is some uncertainty as to what they offered, and of the ceremonies connected with their religious services we know almost nothing. The classical (Roman) writers affirm that they offered on great occasions human sacrifices; as for success in war or for relief from dangerous diseases. Cæsar has given a detailed account of the manner in which this was done. "They have images of immense size, the limbs of which are framed with twisted twigs and filled with living persons. These being set on fire, those within are encompassed by the flames." Many attempts have been made by Celtic writers to shake the testimony of the Roman historians to this fact, but without success.

The Druids observed two festivals in each year. The former took place in the beginning of May, and was called Beltane or "fire of God." On this occasion a large fire was kindled on some elevated spot, in honor of the sun, whose returning beneficence they thus welcomed after the gloom and desolation of winter. Of this custom a trace remains in the name given to Whitsunday in parts of Scotland to this day. Sir Walter Scott uses the word in the "Boat Song" in the "Lady of the Lake":

"Ours is no sapling, chance sown by the fountain,
Blooming at Beltane in winter to fade;" etc.

The other great festival of the Druids was called "Samh'in," or "fire of peace," and was held on Hallow-eve (first of November), which still retains this designation in the Highlands of Scotland. On this occasion the Druids assembled in solemn conclave, in the most central part of the district, to discharge the judicial functions of their order. All questions, whether public or

private, all crimes against person or property, were at this time brought before them for adjudication. With these judicial acts were combined certain superstitious usages, especially the kindling of the sacred fire, from which all the fires in the district, which had been beforehand scrupulously extinguished, might be relighted. This usage of kindling fires on Hallow-eve lingered in the British islands long after the establishment of Christianity.

Besides these two great annual festivals, the Druids were in the habit of observing the full moon, and especially the sixth day of the moon. On the latter they sought the Mistletoe, which grew on their favorite oaks, and to which, as well as to the oak itself, they ascribed a peculiar virtue and sacredness. The discovery of it was an occasion of rejoicing and solemn worship. "They call it," says Pliny, "by a word in their language, which means 'heal-all,' and having made solemn preparation for feasting and sacrifice under the tree, they drive thither two milk-white bulls, whose horns are then for the first time bound. The priest then, robed in white, ascends the tree, and cuts off the mistletoe with a golden sickle. It is caught in a white mantle, after which they proceed to slay the victims, at the same time praying that God would render his gift prosperous to those to whom he had given it." They drink the water in which it has been infused, and think it a remedy for all diseases. The mistletoe is a parasitic plant, and is not always nor often found on the oak, so that when it is found it is the more precious.

The Druids were the teachers of morality as well as of religion. Of their ethical teaching a valuable specimen is preserved in the Triads of the Welsh Bards, and from this we may gather that their views of moral rectitude were on the whole just, and that they held and inculcated many very noble and valuable principles of conduct. They were also the men of science and learning of their age and people. Whether they were acquainted with letters or not has been disputed, though the probability is strong that they were, to some extent. But it is certain that they committed nothing of their

doctrine, their history, or their poetry to writing. Their teaching was oral, and their literature (if such a word may be used in such a case) was preserved solely by tradition. But the Roman writers admit that "they paid much attention to the order and laws of nature, and investigated and taught to the youth under their charge many things concerning the stars and their motions, the size of the world and the lands, and concerning the might and power of the immortal gods."

Their history consisted in traditional tales, in which the heroic deeds of their forefathers were celebrated. These were apparently in verse, and thus constituted part of the poetry as well as the history of the Druids. In the poems of Ossian we have, if not the actual productions of Druidical times, what may be considered faithful representations of the songs of the Bards.

The Bards were an essential part of the Druidical hierarchy. One author, Pennant, says, "The Bards were supposed to be endowed with powers equal to inspiration. They were the oral historians of all past transactions, public and private. They were also accomplished genealogists," etc.

Pennant gives a minute account of the Eisteddfods or sessions of the Bards and minstrels, which were held in Wales for many centuries, long after the Druidical priesthood in its other departments became extinct. At these meetings none but Bards of merit were suffered to rehearse their pieces, and minstrels of skill to perform. Judges were appointed to decide on their respective abilities, and suitable degrees were conferred. In the earlier period the judges were appointed by the Welsh princes, and after the conquest of Wales, by commission from the kings of England. Yet the tradition is that Edward I., in revenge for the influence of the Bards in animating the resistance of the people to his sway, persecuted them with great cruelty. This tradition has furnished the poet Gray with the subject of his celebrated ode, the "Bard."

There are still occasional meetings of the lovers of Welsh poetry and music, held under the ancient name. Among Mrs. Hemans' poems is one written for an

Eisteddfod, or meeting of Welsh Bards, held in London, May 22, 1822. It begins with a description of the ancient meeting, of which the following lines are a part:

“ . . . midst the eternal cliffs, whose strength defied
The crested Roman in his hour of pride;
And where the Druid's ancient cromlech frowned,
And the oaks breathed mysterious murmurs round,
There thronged the inspired of yore! on plain or height,
In the sun's face, beneath the eye of light,
And baring unto heaven each noble head,
Stood in the circle, where none else might tread.”

The Druidical system was at its height at the time of the Roman invasion under Julius Cæsar. Against the Druids, as their chief enemies, these conquerors of the world directed their unsparing fury. The Druids, harassed at all points on the mainland, retreated to Anglesey and Iona, where for a season they found shelter and continued their now dishonored rites.

The Druids retained their predominance in Iona and over the adjacent islands and mainland until they were supplanted and their superstitions overturned by the arrival of St. Columba, the apostle of the Highlands, by whom the inhabitants of that district were first led to profess Christianity.

IONA

One of the smallest of the British Isles, situated near a rugged and barren coast, surrounded by dangerous seas, and possessing no sources of internal wealth, Iona has obtained an imperishable place in history as the seat of civilization and religion at a time when the darkness of heathenism hung over almost the whole of Northern Europe. Iona or Icolmkill is situated at the extremity of the island of Mull, from which it is separated by a strait of half a mile in breadth, its distance from the mainland of Scotland being thirty-six miles.

Columba was a native of Ireland, and connected by birth with the princes of the land. Ireland was at that time a land of gospel light, while the western and

northern parts of Scotland were still immersed in the darkness of heathenism. Columba with twelve friends landed on the island of Iona in the year of our Lord 563, having made the passage in a wicker boat covered with hides. The Druids who occupied the island endeavored to prevent his settling there, and the savage nations on the adjoining shores incommoded him with their hostility, and on several occasions endangered his life by their attacks. Yet by his perseverance and zeal he surmounted all opposition, procured from the king a gift of the island, and established there a monastery of which he was the abbot. He was unwearied in his labors to disseminate a knowledge of the Scriptures throughout the Highlands and islands of Scotland, and such was the reverence paid him that though not a bishop, but merely a presbyter and monk, the entire province with its bishops was subject to him and his successors. The Pictish monarch was so impressed with a sense of his wisdom and worth that he held him in the highest honor, and the neighboring chiefs and princes sought his counsel and availed themselves of his judgment in settling their disputes.

When Columba landed on Iona he was attended by twelve followers whom he had formed into a religious body of which he was the head. To these, as occasion required, others were from time to time added, so that the original number was always kept up. Their institution was called a monastery and the superior an abbot, but the system had little in common with the monastic institutions of later times. The name by which those who submitted to the rule were known was that of Culdees, probably from the Latin "*cultores Dei*"—worshippers of God. They were a body of religious persons associated together for the purpose of aiding each other in the common work of preaching the gospel and teaching youth, as well as maintaining in themselves the fervor of devotion by united exercises of worship. On entering the order certain vows were taken by the members, but they were not those which were usually imposed by monastic orders, for of these, which are three,—celibacy, poverty, and obedience,—the Cul-

dees were bound to none except the third. To poverty they did not bind themselves; on the contrary they seem to have labored diligently to procure for themselves and those dependent on them the comforts of life. Marriage also was allowed them, and most of them seem to have entered into that state. True, their wives were not permitted to reside with them at the institution, but they had a residence assigned to them in an adjacent locality. Near Iona there is an island which still bears the name of "Eilen nam ban," women's island, where their husbands seem to have resided with them, except when duty required their presence in the school or the sanctuary.

Campbell, in his poem of "Reullura," alludes to the married monks of Iona:

"... The pure Culdees
 Were Albyn's earliest priests of God,
 Ere yet an island of her seas
 By foot of Saxon monk was trod,
 Long ere her churchmen by bigotry
 Were barred from holy wedlock's tie.
 'Twas then that Aodh, famed afar,
 In Iona preached the word with power,
 And Reullura, beauty's star,
 Was the partner of his bower."

In one of his "Irish Melodies," Moore gives the legend of St. Senanus and the lady who sought shelter on the island, but was repulsed:

"O, haste and leave this sacred isle,
 Unholy bark, ere morning smile;
 For on thy deck, though dark it be,
 A female form I see;
 And I have sworn this sainted sod
 Shall ne'er by woman's foot be trod."

In these respects and in others the Culdees departed from the established rules of the Romish church, and consequently were deemed heretical. The consequence was that as the power of the latter advanced that of the Culdees was enfeebled. It was not, however, till the thirteenth century that the communities of the Culdees

were suppressed and the members dispersed. They still continued to labor as individuals, and resisted the inroads of Papal usurpation as they best might till the light of the Reformation dawned on the world.

Iona, from its position in the western seas, was exposed to the assaults of the Norwegian and Danish rovers by whom those seas were infested, and by them it was repeatedly pillaged, its dwellings burned, and its peaceful inhabitants put to the sword. These unfavorable circumstances led to its gradual decline, which was expedited by the subversion of the Culdees throughout Scotland. Under the reign of Popery the island became the seat of a nunnery, the ruins of which are still seen. At the Reformation, the nuns were allowed to remain, living in community, when the abbey was dismantled.

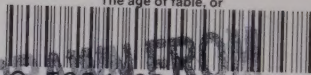
Iona is now chiefly resorted to by travellers on account of the numerous ecclesiastical and sepulchral remains which are found upon it. The principal of these are the Cathedral or Abbey Church and the Chapel of the Nunnery. Besides these remains of ecclesiastical antiquity, there are some of an earlier date, and pointing to the existence on the island of forms of worship and belief different from those of Christianity. These are the circular Cairns which are found in various parts, and which seem to have been of Druidical origin. It is in reference to all these remains of ancient religion that Johnson exclaims, "That man is little to be envied whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plains of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer amid the ruins of Iona."

In the "Lord of the Isles" Scott beautifully contrasts the church on Iona with the cave of Staffa, opposite:

"Nature herself, it seemed, would raise
A minister to her Maker's praise!
Not for a meaner use ascend
Her columns, or her arches bend;
Nor of a theme less solemn tells
That mighty surge that ebbs and swells,
And still, between each awful pause,
From the high vault an answer draws,

In varied tone, prolonged and high,
That mocks the organ's melody;
Nor doth its entrance front in vain
To old Iona's holy fane,
That Nature's voice might seem to say,
Well hast thou done, frail child of clay!
Thy humble powers that stately shrine
Tasked high and hard—but witness **mine!**"

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